

OCTOBER~1912

15 CENTS

AINSLEE'S

THE MAGAZINE THAT ENTERTAINS



COMPLETE NOVEL
by

MARIE VAN VORST

Illustrated by Charles C. Smith 11/12

SHORT STORIES BY MAY FUTRELLE, WELLS HASTINGS,
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¶ We hope you will read every story in this number of Ainslee's, beginning with Marie VanVorst's novelette and ending with Walter Prichard Eaton's delightful little love story. We believe you will find it a magazine well worth telling other people about.

¶ The November number will make an equally strong appeal to those in search of clean, crisp entertainment. It is more than a mere collection of well-known names; it is a collection of stories of the sort that have made these names well known.

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¶ Among the dozen or more short stories will be:

The Green Bottle	May Futrelle
Esposito	Horace Fish
Millinery and Mules	Marie Conway Oemler
Bill Heenan Gets Square	William Slavens McNutt
The By-Road to Nazareth	Nina Wilcox Putnam
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This means not alone food and clothing, but *education*, for in these progressive days the young man or woman without a *good* education is handicapped, to say the least.

But education isn't always so easy. Grammar school and high school, yes; for the youngsters live at home and the cost doesn't seem to count.

It is another matter when high-school days are over and the next step—the *necessary* step—must be seminary or college.

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AINSLEE'S

THE MAGAZINE THAT ENTERTAINS

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 Entered September 11, 1902, at New York as Second-class Matter, under Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

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¶ *Cleveland Plain Dealer*—"Dan Mathews" was a fine tale. "The Shepherd of the Hills" was an inspiration. And now he sends us "The Winning of Barbara Worth" * * a twentieth century epic.

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¶ *Grand Rapids Herald*—"It is the greatest story since 'Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.'"

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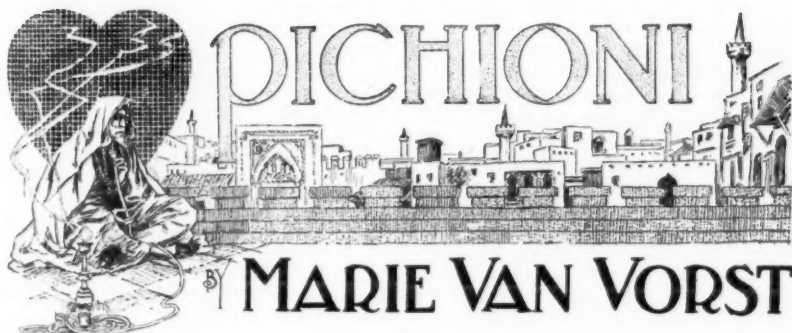
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AINSLEE'S

VOL. XXX.

OCTOBER, 1912.

No. 3.



CHAPTER I.

MONSIEUR LE COMTE DE SABRON, in the undress uniform of captain in the — Cavalry, sat smoking and thinking.

"What is the use of being twenty-seven years old, with the brevet of captain and some distinctions, when you are a poor man, with little family to speak of—in short, what is the good of anything if you are alone in the world, and no one cares what becomes of you to any great extent?"

He rang his bell, and when his *ordonnance* appeared, said sharply:

"*Que diable* is the noise in the stable, Gaston? Don't you know that when I smoke at this hour all Tarascon must be kept utterly silent?"

Tarascon is never silent. No French meridional town is, especially in the warm sunlight of a glorious May day.

"The noise, *mon capitaine*," said Gaston, who worshiped his superior officer, "is rather melancholy."

"Melancholy," exclaimed the young officer. "It's infernal! Stop it at once!"

The *ordonnance* held his kept in his

hand. He had a round, good-natured face, and kind, gray eyes that were used to twinkle at his master's humor and caprices.

"I beg pardon, *mon capitaine*, but a very serious event is taking place."

"It will be more serious yet, Gaston, if you don't keep things quiet."

"I am sorry to say, *mon capitaine*, that Michette has just died."

"Michette!" exclaimed his master. "What relation is she of yours, Gaston?"

"Ah, *mon capitaine*," grinned the *ordonnance*, "relation! None! It is the little red terrier that Monsieur le Capitaine may have remarked now and then in the garden."

Sabron nodded, and took his cigarette out of his mouth, as though in respect for the deceased.

"Ah, yes," he said, "that melancholy little dog! Well, Gaston?"

"She has just breathed her last, *mon capitaine*, and she is leaving behind her rather a large family."

"I am not surprised," said the officer.

"There are six," vouchsafed Gaston, "of which, if *mon capitaine* is willing, I should like to keep one."

"Nonsense!" said Sabron. "On no

account! You know perfectly well, Gaston, that I don't surround myself with things that can make me suffer. I have not kept a dog in ten years. I try not to care about my horses, even. Everything to which I attach myself dies, or causes me regret and pain. And I won't have a miserable little puppy to complicate existence."

"*Bien, mon capitaine,*" accepted the *ordonnance* tranquilly. "I have given away five. The sixth is in the stable. If Monsieur le Capitaine would come down and look at it——"

Sabron rose, threw his cigarette away, and, following across the garden in the bland May light, went into the stable where Madame Michette, a small, wire-haired Irish terrier, had given birth to a fine family, and herself gone the way of those who do their duty to their race. In the straw at his feet Sabron saw a ratlike, unprepossessing little object crawling about feebly in search of warmth and nourishment, uttering pitiful little cries. Its extreme loneliness and helplessness touched the big soldier, who said curtly to his man:

"Wrap it up, and if you don't know how to feed it I should not be surprised if I could induce it to take a little warm milk from a quill. At all events we will have a try with it. Fetch it along to my rooms."

And as he retraced his steps, leaving his order to be executed, he thought to himself: "The little beggar is not much more alone in the world than I am." As he said that he recalled a word in the meridional patois—Pichioni—which means "poor little thing."

"I will call it Pichioni," he thought, "and we will see if it can't do better than its name suggests."

He went slowly back to his rooms, and busied himself at his table with his correspondence, which he had left late to open. Among the letters was an invitation from the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs, an American married to a Frenchman, and the great lady of the country thereabouts. She wrote:

Will you not come to dine with us on Sunday? I have my niece with me. She would be glad to see a French soldier. She

has expressed such a wish. She comes from a country where soldiers are rare. We dine at eight.

Sabron scrutinized the letter, and its fine, clear handwriting. Its wording, less formal than a French invitation was likely to be, gave him a sense of cordiality. He had seen, on his rides, the beautiful lines of the Château Des Mille Fleurs. Its turrets surely looked upon the Rhône. There would be a divine view from the terraces. It would be a pleasure to go there. He thought more of what the place would be than of the inhabitants, for he was something of a hermit, rather timid and very reserved.

He was writing a line of acceptance when Gaston came in, a tiny bundle in his hand.

"Put Pichioni over there in the sunlight," ordered the officer, "and we will see if we can bring him up by hand."

CHAPTER II.

He remembered all his life the first dinner at the Château Des Mille Fleurs, where from the terrace he saw the Rhône lying under the early moonlight, and the shadows falling around the castle of good King René.

As he passed in, his sword clanking—for he wore full-dress uniform to dine with the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs—he delightedly saw the picture of two ladies in their drawing-room; the marquise in a very splendid dress, which he never could remember, and her niece, a young lady from a country whose name it took him long to learn to pronounce, in a dress so simple that of course he never could forget it. He remembered for a great many years the fall of the ribbon at her pretty waist, the bunch of sweet peas at her girdle, and he always remembered the face that made the charm of the picture.

Their welcome to him was gracious. The American girl spoke French with an accent which Sabron thought bewilderingly charming, and he put aside some of his reserve and laughed and talked with them much at his ease. After dinner—this he remembered with peculiar distinctness—Miss Redmond

sang for him, and although he understood none of the words of the English ballad, he learned the melody by heart, and it followed with him when he left. It went with him as he crossed the terrace into the moonlight to mount his horse; it went home with him, he hummed it, and when he got up to his room he hummed it again as he bent over the little roll of flannel in the corner, and fed the puppy hot milk from a quill.

This was a painstaking operation, and required patience and delicacy, both of which the big man had at his finger tips. The tune of Miss Redmond's song did for a lullaby, and the puppy fell comfortably to sleep while Sabron kept the picture of his evening's outing very contentedly in his mind. But later he discovered that he was not so contented, and counted the hours when he might return.

He shortly made a call at the Château Des Mille Fleurs, with the result that he had a new picture to add to his collection. This time it was the picture of a lady alone; the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs doing tapestry. Sabron found that he had grown reticent again, and listened for another step and another voice, and heard nothing. But before he took leave there was a hint of a second invitation to dinner at the Château Des Mille Fleurs.

The marquise herself was very handsome that afternoon, and wore yet another bewildering dress. Sabron's simple taste was dazzled. Nevertheless, she made a graceful picture, one of beauty and refinement, and the young soldier took it away with him. As his horse began to trot at the foot of the alley, near the poplars at the lower end of the rose terrace he caught a glimpse of a white dress—undoubtedly a simpler dress than that worn by the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs.

CHAPTER III.

"I don't think, *mon capitaine*, that it is any use," Gaston told his master.

Sabron, in his shirt sleeves, sat before a table on which, in a basket, lay

Michette's only surviving puppy, a month old. Sabron already knew how bright its eyes were, and how alluring its young ways.

"Be still, Gaston," commanded the officer. "You are not come from the South, or you would be more sanguine. Pichioni has *got* to live."

The puppy's clumsy, adventuresome feet had taken him as far as the high-road, and on this day, as it were in order that he should understand the struggle for existence, a bicycle had cut him down in the prime of his youth, and now, according to Gaston: "There wasn't much use."

Pichioni was bandaged around his hind quarters, and his adorable little head and forepaws came out of the handkerchief bandage.

"He won't eat anything from me, *mon capitaine*," said Gaston, and Sabron ceremoniously opened the puppy's mouth and thrust down what the veterinary had given. Pichioni swallowed obediently.

He had just come in from a long, hard day with his troops, but tired as he was he gave his attention to Pichioni. A second invitation to dinner lay on his table; he had counted the days until tonight. It seemed too good to be true; he thought that another picture was to add itself to his collection. He had mentally enjoyed the other often, giving preference to the first, when he dined at the château; but there had been a thrill in the second caused by the fluttering of the white dress down by the poplar walk.

To-night he should have the pleasure of taking in Miss Redmond to dinner.

"See, *mon capitaine*," said Gaston, "the poor little fellow can't swallow it."

The water trickled out from either side of Pichioni's mouth. The sturdy terrier refused milk in all forms, had done so since Sabron weaned him; but Sabron now returned to his nursery days, made Gaston fetch him warm milk and, taking the quill, dropped a few drops of the soothing liquid, into which he put a dash of brandy, down Pichioni's throat. Pichioni swallowed, gave a feeble yelp, and closed his eyes.

When he opened them the glaze had gone.

The officer hurried into his evening clothes, and ordered Gaston, as he tied his cravat, to feed the puppy a little of the stimulant every hour until he should return. Pichioni's eyes, now open, followed his handsome master to the door. As Sabron opened it he gave a pathetic yelp which made the captain turn around.

"Believe me, *mon capitaine*," said the *ordonnance*, with melancholy fatality, "it is no use. If I am left with Pichioni it will be only to see him die. I know his spirit, *mon capitaine*. He lives for you alone."

"Nonsense!" said the young officer impatiently, drawing on his gloves.

Pichioni gave a plaintive wail from the bandages, and tried to stir.

"As for feeding him, *mon capitaine*," the *ordonnance* threw up his hands, "he will be stiff by the time——"

But Sabron was halfway down the stairs. The door was open, and on the porch he heard distinctly a third tenderly pathetic wail.

That evening the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs read aloud to her niece the news that the Count Sabron was not coming to dinner. He was "absolutely desolated," and had no words to express his regret and disappointment. The pleasure of dining with them both, a pleasure to which he had looked forward for a fortnight, must be renounced, because he was obliged to sit up with a very sick friend, as there was no one else to take his place. In expressing his undying devotion and his renewed excuses, he put his homage at their feet, and kissed their hands.

The Marquise Des Mille Fleurs, wearing another very beautiful dress, looked up at her niece, who was playing at the piano.

"A very poor excuse, my dear Julia, and a very late one."

"It sounds true, however. I believe him, don't you, *ma tante*?"

"I do *not*," said Madame Des Mille Fleurs emphatically. "A Frenchman of good education is not supposed to refuse

a dinner invitation an hour before he is expected. Nothing but a case of life and death would excuse it."

"He says a 'very sick friend,' *ma tante*."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed the marquise.

Miss Redmond played a few bars of the tune which Sabron had hummed, and which more than once had soothed Pichioni, and which, did she know, Sabron was actually humming at that moment.

"I am rather disappointed," said the young girl, "and if we find it is a matter of life and death, *ma tante*, we will forgive him?"

The Marquise Des Mille Fleurs had invited the Comte De Sabron solely because she had been asked to do so by his colonel, who was an old and valued friend. She had other plans for her niece.

"I feel, my dear," she answered her now, "quite safe in promising that if it is a question of life and death we will forgive him. I shall see his colonel tomorrow, and ask him point-blank."

Miss Redmond rose from the piano, and came over to her aunt, for dinner had been announced.

"Well, what do you think?" She slipped her hand in her aunt's arm. "Really, *ma tante*, what do you think *could* be the reason?"

"Please don't ask me," exclaimed the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs impatiently. "The *reasons* for young men's caprices are sometimes just as well not inquired into."

If Sabron, smoking in his bachelor quarters, lonely and disappointed, watching with an extraordinary fidelity by his "sick friend," could have seen the two ladies at their grand, solitary dinner, his unfilled place between them, he might have felt the picture charming enough to have added to his collection.

CHAPTER IV.

Pichioni repaid what he gave.

He did not think that by getting well, reserving the right for the rest of his life to a distinguished limp in his right leg, he had done all that was expected

of him. He developed an ecstatic devotion to the captain, impossible for any human heart to adequately return. He followed Sabron like a shadow, and when he could not follow him, took his place on a chair in the window, there to sit, his sharp profile against the light, his pointed ears forward, watching for the uniform he knew and admired extravagantly.

Pichioni was a thoroughbred, and every muscle and fiber showed it, every hair and point asserted it, and he loved as only thoroughbreds can. You may say what you like about mongrel attachments, the thoroughbred in all cases reserves his brilliancy for crises.

Sabron, who had only seen Miss Redmond twice, and thought about her countless times, never quite forgave his friend for the illness which kept him from the château. There was always in Sabron's mind, much as he loved Pichioni, the feeling that if he had gone that night—

There was not another invitation!

"*Toyons, mon cher,*" his colonel had said to him kindly the next time he met him, "what *gaffe* have you been guilty of at the Château Des Mille Fleurs?"

Poor Sabron blushed and shrugged his shoulders.

"I assure you," said the colonel, "that I did you harm there without knowing it. Madame Des Mille Fleurs, who is a very clever woman, asked with interest and sympathy who your 'very sick friend' could be. As no one *was* very sick, according to my knowledge, I told her so. She seemed triumphant, and I saw at once that I had put you in the wrong."

It would have been simple to have explained to the colonel, but Sabron, reticent and reserved, did not choose to do so. He made a very insufficient excuse, and the colonel, as well as the marquise, thought ill of him. He learned later, with chagrin, that his friends were gone from the Midi. Rooted to the spot himself by his duties, he could not follow them. Meanwhile Pichioni thrived, grew, cheered his loneliness, jumped over a stick, learned a trick or two from Gaston, and a great many fascinating

wiles and ways, no doubt inherited from his mother. He had a sense of humor truly Irish, a power of devotion that we designate as "canine," no doubt because no member of the human race has ever deserved it.

CHAPTER V.

Sabron longed for a change with autumn, when the falling leaves made the roads golden roundabout the Château Des Mille Fleurs. He thought he would like to go away. He rode his horse one day up to the property of the hard-hearted, unforgiving lady, and, finding the gate open, rode through the grounds up to the terrace. Seeing no one, he sat in his saddle looking over the golden country to the Rhône and the castle of the good King René, where the autumn mists were like banners floating from the towers.

There was a solitary beauty around the lovely place that spoke to the young officer with an agreeable melancholy. He fancied that Miss Redmond must often have looked out from one of the windows, and he wondered which one. The terrace was deserted, and leaves from the vines strewed it with red and golden specters. Pichioni raced after them, for the wind started them flying, and he rolled his tawny little body over and over in the rustling leaves. Then a rabbit, which before the arrival of Sabron had been sitting comfortably on the terrace stones, scuttled away like mad, and Pichioni, somewhat hindered by his limp, tore after it.

The deserted château, the fact that there was nothing in his military life beyond the routine to interest him now in Tarascon, made Sabron eagerly look forward to a change, and he waited for letters from the minister of war which should send him to a new post.

The following day after his visit to the château he took a walk, Pichioni at his heels, and stood aside in the high-road to let a motor pass him, but the motor drew up to the side of the road while the chauffeur got out to adjust some portion of the mechanism out of order. Some one leaned from the win-

dow, and Sabron came forward to speak to the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs and another lady by her side.

"How do you do, monsieur? Do you remember us?"

Had he ever forgotten them? He regretted so very much not having been able to dine with them in the spring.

"And your sick friend?" asked Madame Des Mille Fleurs keenly. "Did he recover?"

"Yes," said Sabron, and Miss Redmond, who leaned forward, smiled at him and extended her pretty hand. Sabron opened the motor door.

"What a darling dog!" Miss Redmond cried. "What a bewitching face he has! He is an Irish terrier, isn't he?"

Sabron called Pichioni, who diverted his attention from the chauffeur to come and be hauled up by the collar and presented. Sabron shook off his reticence.

"Let me make a confession, madame. This is my 'very sick friend.' Pichioni was at the point of death the night of your dinner, and I was just leaving the house when I realized that the helpless little chap could not weather the breeze without me. He had been run over by a bicycle, and he needed very special care."

Miss Redmond's hand was on Pichioni's head, between his pointed ears. She looked sympathetic. She looked amused. She smiled.

"It was a question of 'life and death,' wasn't it?" she said eagerly to Sabron.

"Really, it was just that," answered the young officer, not knowing how significant the words were to the two ladies.

Madame Des Mille Fleurs knew that she was beaten, and that she owed a wager, and she was ready to pay her debt. The chauffeur got up on his seat, and she asked suavely:

"Won't you let us take you home, Monsieur De Sabron?"

He thanked them. He was walking, and had not finished his exercise.

"At all events," she pursued, "now that your excuse is no longer a good one, you *will* come this week to dinner, will you not?"

He would, of course, and watched the motor drive away in the autumn sunlight, holding Pichioni by the collar to restrain his ardor, and he wished rather less for the order from the minister of war to change his quarters than he had before.

CHAPTER VI.

He had received his letter from the minister of war. Like many things we wish for, set our hopes upon, when they come, we find that we do not want them at any price. The order was unwelcome. Sabron was to go to Algiers.

Winter is never very ugly around Tarascon. Like a lovely bunch of fruit in the brightest corner of a happy vineyard, the Midi is sheltered from the rude experiences of northern seasons. Nevertheless, rains and winds, sea-born and vigorous, had swept in and upon the little town. The mistral came whistling, and Sabron, from his window, looked down on his little garden from which summer had entirely flown. Pichioni, by his side, looked down as well, but his expression was ecstatic, for he saw, sliding along the brick wall, a cat with which he was on the most excited terms. His body tense, his ears forward, he gave a sharp series of barks and little soft growls, while his master tapped the windowpane to the tune of Miss Redmond's song.

Although Sabron had heard this melody several times, he did not know the words, or that they were of a semi-religious, extremely sentimental character, which would have been difficult to translate into French. He did not know that they ran something like this:

God keep you safe, my love,
All through the night;
Rest close in His encircling arms
Until the light.

And there was more of it. He only knew that there was a pathos in the tune which spoke to his warm heart; which caressed and captivated him, and which made him deeply long for a happiness he thought it unlikely he should ever know.

Many pictures had been added to his collection. Miss Redmond at dinner,

Miss Julia Redmond—he knew her first name now—before her piano. Miss Redmond in a smart coat, walking with him down the alley, while Pichioni chased flying leaves and apparitions of rabbits hither and thither.

The Comte De Sabron had always dreaded just what happened to him. He had fallen in love with a woman beyond his reach, for he had no fortune whatsoever, nothing but his captain's pay and his hard soldier's life, a wanderer's life, and one which he hesitated to ask a woman to share. In spite of the fact that Madame Des Mille Fleurs was hospitable to him, she was not cordial, and he understood that she did not consider him a *parti* for her niece. Other guests, as well as he, had shared the hospitality. He had been jealous of them, and he could not help seeing Miss Redmond's preference for himself. Not that he wanted to help it, but he thought himself fatuous sometimes when he recalled that she had really sung to him, decidedly walked by his side, and he felt already her sympathy.

"Pichioni," he said to his companion, "we are better off in Algiers, *mon vicar*. The desert is the place for us. We shall get rid of fancies there, and do some hard fighting one way or another."

Pichioni, whose eyes had followed the cat out of sight, sprang upon his master, and seemed quite ready for the new departure.

"I shall at least have you," Sabron said, pulling his ears. "We will have some famous runs, and I will introduce you to a camel, and make you acquainted with several donkeys, not to speak of the historic Arab steeds. You will see, my friend, that there are other animals beside yourself in creation."

"A telegram for *mon capitaine*."

Gaston came in with the blue envelope, which Sabron tore open.

You will take with you neither horses nor dogs.

It was an order from the minister of war, just such a one as was sent to some half dozen other young officers, all of whom, no doubt, felt more or less discomfited.

Sabron twisted the telegram, put it in the fireplace, and lit his cigarette with it, watching Pichioni, who, finding himself a comfortable corner in the arm-chair, had settled down for a nap.

"So," nodded the young man aloud, "I shall not even have Pichioni."

He smoked, musing. In the rigid discipline of his soldier's life he was used to obedience. His softened eyes, however, and his nervous fingers, as they pulled at his mustache, showed that the command had touched him.

"What shall I do with you, old fellow?"

Although Sabron's voice was low, the dog, whose head was down upon his paws, turned his bright brown eyes on his master with confidence and affection. Sabron walked across the floor, smoking, the spurs on his heels clanking, the light shining on his brilliant boots and on his uniform. He was a splendid-looking fellow, with race and breeding.

"They want us to be lonely," he thought. "All that the chiefs consider is the soldier—not the man. Even the companionship of my dog is denied me. What do they think I am going to do out there in the long Eastern evenings?" He reflected. "What does the world expect an uncompanioned wanderer to do?" There are many things, and the less thought about them the better.

"A letter for Monsieur le Capitaine."

Gaston returned with a note, which he presented stiffly, and Pichioni, who chose in his little brain to imagine Gaston an intruder, sprang from the chair like lightning, rushed at the servant, seized the leg of his pantaloons, and began to worry it, growling. Gaston, as did Sabron, regarded him with adoration. Sabron had not even thought aloud the last words of the telegram, which he had used to light his cigarette.

Nor will it be necessary to take a personal servant. The *indigènes* are capable *ordonnances*.

As he took the letter from Gaston's salver he said curtly:

"I am ordered to Algiers, and I shall not take horses or Pichioni."

The dog, at the mention of his name, set Gaston's leg free and stood quiet, his head lifted.

"Nor you, either, *mon brave Gaston*," Sabron put his hand on his servant's shoulder, the first familiarity he had ever shown a man who served him with devotion, and who would have given his life to save his master's. "Those," said the officer curtly, "are the orders from headquarters, and the least said about it the better."

The ruddy cheek of the servant turned pale. He mechanically touched his forehead.

"*Bien, mon capitaine*," he murmured, with a little catch in his voice.

He stood at attention, then wheeled and without being dismissed stalked out of the room.

Pichioni did not follow. He remained immovable like a little dog cut from bronze; he understood—who shall say how much of the conversation? Sabron threw away his cigarette, then read his letter by the mantelpiece, leaning his arm upon it. He read slowly. He had broken the seal slowly. It was the first letter he had ever seen in this handwriting. It was written in French, and ran like this:

MONSIEUR: My aunt wishes me to ask you if you will come to us for a little music to-morrow afternoon. We hope you will be free, and I hope that you will bring Pichioni. Not that I think he will care for the music, but afterward, perhaps, he will run with us as we walk to the gate. My aunt wishes me to say that she has learned from the colonel that you have been ordered to Algiers. In this way she says that we will have an opportunity of wishing you *bon voyage*, and I say I hope Pichioni will be a comfort to you.

The letter ended in the usual formal French fashion. Sabron, turning the letter and rereading it, found it completed the work that had been going on in his lonely heart. He stood long, musing.

Pichioni lay himself down on the rug, his bright little head between his paws, his affectionate eyes on his master. The firelight shone on them both, the musing young officer and the almost human-hearted little beast. So Gaston found them when he came in with the lamp

shortly, and as he set it down on the table, and its light shone on him, Sabron, glancing at the *ordonnance*, saw that his eyes were red, and liked him none the less for it.

CHAPTER VII.

"It is just as I thought," he told Pichioni. "I took you into my life, you little rascal, against my will, and now, although it's not your fault, you are making me regret it. I shall end, Pichioni, by being a cynic and a misogynist, and learn to make idols of my career and my troops alone. After all, they may be tiresome, but they don't hurt as you do, and some other things as well."

Pichioni, being invited to the Château Des Mille Fleurs, went along with his master, running behind the captain's horse. It was a heavenly January day, soft and mild, full of sunlight and delicious odors, and over the towers of King René's castle the banners were made of celestial blue, and floated all together.

Sabron found the house full of people. He thought it hard that he might not have had one more intimate picture to add to his collection. When he entered the room a young man was playing a violoncello. There was a group at the piano, and among the people the only one he clearly saw was the hostess, Madame Des Mille Fleurs, in a gorgeous velvet frock. Miss Redmond stood by the window, listening to the music. She saw him come in, and smiled to him, and from that moment his eyes hardly left her.

What the music was that afternoon the Comte De Sabron could not have told very intelligently. Much of it was sweet, all of it was touching, but when Miss Redmond sang and chose the little song of which he had made a lullaby, and sang it divinely through, Sabron, his hands clasped behind his back, and his head bent, still looking at her, thought that his heart would break. It was horrible to go away and not tell her. It was cowardly to feel so much and not be able to speak of it. And he felt that he might be equal to some

almost savage act, such as crossing the room violently, putting his hand over her slender one, and saying: I am a soldier; I have nothing but a soldier's life. I am going to Africa to-morrow. Come with me; I want you. Come!

All of which, slightly impossible, and quite out of the question, had nevertheless charmed and somewhat soothed him. The words of her English song, almost barbaric to him, because incomprehensible, fell on his ears. Its melody was already part of him.

"Monsieur De Sabron," said Madame Des Mille Fleurs, "you are going away to-morrow?"

"Yes, madame."

"I expect you will be engaged in some awful native skirmishes. Perhaps you will even be able to send back a tiger skin."

"There are no tigers in that part of Africa, madame."

The young soldier's dark eyes rested almost hostilely on the gorgeous marquise in her red gown. He felt that she was glad to have him go. He wanted to say: "I shall come back, however; I shall come back, and when I return—" but he knew that such a boast, or even such a hope, was fruitless.

His colonel had told him only the day before that Miss Redmond was one of the richest American heiresses, and there was a question of a duke or a prince and Heaven only knew what not in the way of titles. As the lady moved away her progress was something like the rolling of an elegant velvet chair, and while his feelings were still disturbed, Miss Redmond crossed the room to him. Before Sabron quite knew how they had been able to escape the others or leave the room, he was standing with her in the winter garden, where the sunlight came in through trellises, and the perfume of the warmed plants was heavy and sweet. Below them flowed the Rhône, golden in the winter's light. The blue river swept its waves around old Tarascon and the battlements of King René's towers.

There was no love scene—that is, not what the average reader or writer would call a love scene. The invisible feelings

were there, but French love-making, when it is honorable, has ways peculiar and intricate. The heart of the honorable Frenchman is surrounded by a moat, and impregnable to anything such as the careless American lover knows.

"You are going to Algiers to-morrow, Monsieur De Sabron?" Miss Redmond smiled, and how was Sabron to realize that she could not very well have wept there and then, had she wished to do so?

"Yes," he said. "I love my regiment. I love my work. I have always wanted to see colonial service."

"Have you? It is delightful to find one's ambitions and desires satisfied," said Miss Redmond. "I have always longed to see the desert. It must be beautiful. Of course, you are going to take Pichioni?"

"Ah!" exclaimed Sabron. "That is just what I am not going to do."

"What!" she cried. "You are never going to leave that darling dog behind you?"

"I must unfortunately. My superior officers do not allow me to take horses or dogs, or even my servant."

"Heavens!" she exclaimed. "What brutes they are! Why, Pichioni will die of a broken heart." Then she said gently: "You are leaving him with Gaston?"

Sabron shook his head.

"Gaston would not be able to keep him."

"Ah!" she breathed. "He is looking for a home? Is he? If so, would you—might I take care of Pichioni?"

The Frenchman impulsively put out his hand, and she as quickly laid her own in it.

"You are too good!" he murmured. "Thank you. Pichioni will thank you. I shall be so happy to leave him."

He kissed her hand. That was all.

From the salon came the noise of voices, and the violoncellist was beginning a new concerto. They stood looking at each other. Nothing could have prevented the long look, although the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs was rolling toward them across the polished floor of the music room. As though Sabron

realized that he might never see this lovely young woman again, probably never would see her, and wanted before he left to have something made clear, he asked quickly:

"Could you, mademoiselle, in a word or two tell me the meaning of the English song you sang?"

She flushed and laughed slightly.

"Well, it is not very easy to put it in prose," she hesitated. "Things sound so differently in music and poetry; but it means," she said in French bravely, "why, it is a sort of prayer that some one you love very much should be kept safe night and day. That's about all. There is a little sadness in it, as though"—and her cheeks glowed—"as if there was a sort of separation."

"Ah!" breathed the officer deeply. "I understand. Thank you!"

And just then Madame Des Mille Fleurs rolled up between them, and with an unmistakable satisfaction presented to her niece the gentleman she had secured.

"My dear Julia, my godson, the Duc De Tremont."

And Sabron bowed to both the ladies, to the duc, and went away.

This was the picture he might add to his collection: the older woman in her vivid dress, Julia in a simpler gown, and the Duc De Tremont bowing over her hand.

When he went out to the front terrace Gaston was there with his horse, and Pichioni as well, stiffly waiting at attention.

"Gaston," said Sabron to his man, "will you take Pichioni around to the servant's quarters, and give him to Miss Redmond's maid? I am going to leave him here."

"Good, *mon capitaine*," said the *ordonnance*, and whistled to the dog.

Pichioni sprang toward his master with a short, sharp bark. What he understood would be hard to say, but all that he wanted to do was to remain with Sabron. Sabron bent down, and stroked him.

"Go, my friend, with Gaston. Go, *mon vieux*, go," he commanded sternly. And the little dog, trained to obedience

as a soldier's dog should be, trotted reluctantly at the heels of the *ordonnance*, and the soldier threw his leg over the saddle and rode away. He rode regardless of anything but the fact that he was going.

CHAPTER VIII.

Pichioni was a soldier's dog, born in a stable, of a mother who had been dear to the canteen. Michette had been *une vrai vivandière*, a real daughter of the regiment.

Pichioni was a worthy son. He adored the drums and trumpets. He adored the fife. He adored the drills, which he was accustomed to watch from a respectable distance. He liked Gaston, and the word had not yet been discovered which would express how he felt toward Monsieur Le Capitaine, his master. His muscular little form expressed it in every fiber. His brown eyes looked it until their pathos might have melted a heart of iron.

There was nothing picturesque to Pichioni in the Château Des Mille Fleurs or in the charming room to which he was brought. The little dog took a flying tour around it, over sofas and chairs, landing on the window seat, where he crouched. He was not wicked, but he was perfectly miserable, and the lovely wiles of Julia Redmond and her endearments left him unmoved. He refused meat and drink, was indifferent to the views from the window, to the beautiful view of King René's castle, to the tantalizing cat sunning herself against the wall. He flew about like mad, leaving destruction in his wake, tugged at the leash when they took him out for exercise. In short, Pichioni was a homesick, lovesick little dog, and curiously endeared himself more than ever to his new mistress. She tied a ribbon around his neck, which he promptly chewed and scratched off. She tried to feed him with her own fair hands; he held his head high, looked bored, and grew thin in the flanks.

"I think Captain De Sabron's little dog is going to die, *ma tante*," she told her aunt.

"Fiddlesticks, my dear Julia! Keep him tied up until he is accustomed to the place. It won't hurt him to fast; he will eat when he is hungry. I have a note from Robert. He has not gone to Monte Carlo."

"Ah!" breathed Miss Redmond indifferently.

She slowly went over to her piano, and played a few measures of music which were a torture to Pichioni, who found these ladylike performances in strong contrast to drums and trumpets. He felt himself as a degraded soldier, and could not understand why he should be relegated to a salon and to the mild society of two ladies who did not even know how to pull his ears or roll him over on the rug with their riding boots and spurs. He sat against the window, as was his habit, looking, watching, yearning.

"*J'ous avez tort, ma chère,*" said her aunt, who was working something less than a thousand flowers on her tapestry. "The chance to be a princess and a Tremont does not come twice in a young girl's life, and you know you have only to be reasonable, Julia."

Miss Redmond's fingers wandered, magnetically drawn by her thoughts, into a song which she played softly through. Pichioni heard and turned his beautiful head and his soft eyes to her. He knew that tune. Neither drums nor trumpets had played it, but there was no doubt about its being fit for soldiers. He had heard his master sing it, hum it, many times. It had soothed his nerves when he was a sick puppy, and it went with many things of the intimate life with his master. He remembered it when he had dozed by the fire, and dreamed of chasing cats and barking at Gaston and being a faithful dog all around; he heard again a beloved voice hum it to him: Pichioni whined, and softly jumped down from his seat. He put his forepaws on Miss Redmond's lap. She stopped and caressed him, and he licked her hand.

"That is the first time I have seen that dog show a spark of human gratitude, Julia. He is probably begging you to open the door and let him take a run."

Indeed, Pichioni did go to the door, and waited appealingly.

"I think you might trust him out. I think he is tamed," said the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs. "He is a real little savage."

Miss Redmond opened the door, and Pichioni shot out. She watched him tear like mad across the terrace, and scuttle into the woods, as she thought, after a rabbit. He was the color of the fallen leaves, and she lost sight of him in the brown and golden brush.

CHAPTER IX.

Sabron's departure had been delayed on account of a strike at the dock yards of Marseilles. He left Tarascon one lovely day toward the end of January, and the old town with its sweetness and its sorrow fell behind, as he rolled away to brighter suns. A friend from Paris took him to the port in his motor, and there Sabron waited some twenty-four hours before he set sail.

His boat lay out on the azure water, the brown rocks of the coast behind it. There was not a ripple on the sea. There was not a breeze to stir as he took the tug which was to convey him. He was inclined to dip his fingers in the indigo ocean, sure that he would find them blue. He climbed up the ladder alongside of the vessel, was welcomed by the captain, who knew him, and turned to go below, for he had been suffering from an attack of fever which ever since his campaign in Morocco laid hold of him from time to time.

Therefore, as he went into his cabin, which he did not leave until the steamer touched Algiers, he failed to see the baggage tender pull up, and failed to see a sailor climb to the deck with a wet, bedraggled thing in his hand that looked like an old fur cap, except that it wriggled, and was alive.

"This, *mon commandant,*" said the sailor to the captain, "is the pluckiest little beast I ever saw."

He dropped a small terrier on the deck, who proceeded to shake himself vigorously and bark with apparent delight.

"No sooner had we pushed out from the quay than this little beggar sprang from the pier, and began to swim after us. He was so funny that we let him swim for a bit, and then we hauled him in. It is evidently a mascot, *mon commandant*, evidently a sailor dog who has run away to sea."

The captain looked with interest at Pichioni, who engaged himself in making his toilet, and biting after a flea or two which had not been drowned.

"We sailors," said the man, saluting, "would like to keep him for luck, *mon commandant*."

"Take him down, then," his superior officer ordered, "and don't let him up among the passengers."

It was a rough voyage. Sabron passed his time saying good-by to France, and trying to keep his mind away from the Château Des Mille Fleurs, which persisted in haunting his uneasy slumber. In a blaze of sunlight, Algiers, the white city, shone upon them on the morning of the third day, and Sabron tried to take a more cheerful view of a soldier's life and fortunes.

He was a soldierly figure, and a handsome one as he walked down the gang-plank to the shore, to be welcomed by fellow officers who were eager to see him, and presently was lost in the little crowd that streamed away from the docks into the white city.

CHAPTER X.

That night after dinner and a cigarette, he strode into the streets to distract his mind with the sight of the Oriental city, and to fill his ears with the eager cries of the crowd. The lamps flickered. He walked leisurely toward the native quarter, jostled as he passed by men in their brilliant costumes, and by a veiled woman or two.

He stopped indifferently before a little café, his eyes on a Turkish bazaar where velvets and scarfs were being sold at double their worth under the light of a flaming yellow lamp. As he stood so, his back to the café, where a number of the ship's crew were drink-

ing, he heard a short, sharp, familiar sound. He could not believe his ears. He heard the bark again, and then he was sprung upon by a little body which ran out from between the legs of the sailor who sat drinking his coffee and liquor.

"Gracious heavens!" exclaimed Sabron, thinking that he must be the victim of a hashish dream. "Pichioni!"

The dog fawned on him, and whined and crouched at his feet. Sabron bent and fondled him. The sailor from the table called the dog imperatively, but Pichioni would have died at his master's feet rather than return. If his throat could have uttered words he would have spoken, but his eyes spoke. They looked even tearful.

"Pichioni, *mon vieux*! No, it can't be Pichioni. But it *is* Pichioni!" And Sabron took him up in his arms. The dog tried to lick his face.

"*Foyons!*" said the officer to the marine who came rolling over to them, "where did you get this dog?"

The young man's voice was imperative, and he fixed stern eyes on the sailor who pulled his forelock and explained.

"He was following me," murmured Sabron. Under his arm the body of Pichioni quivered. "He is my dog. I think his manner proves it. If you have grown fond of him I am sorry for you, but I think you will have to give him up."

Sabron put his hand in his pocket, and turned a little away to be free of the native crowd that, chattering and grinning, amused and curious, and eager to participate in any distribution of coin, was gathering around him. He managed, without being too conspicuous, to find a couple of gold pieces which he put into the hand of the sailor.

"Thanks for taking care of him. I am at the Royal Hotel." He nodded, and with Pichioni pushed his way through the crowd and out of the bazaar.

He could not interview the dog himself, although he listened, amused, to Pichioni's own manner of speech. He spent the latter part of the evening com-

posing a letter to the minister of war, and, although it was short, it must have possessed certain evident and telling qualities, for before he left Algiers proper, for the desert, Sabron received a telegram which was to the point:

You may keep your dog. I congratulate you on such a faithful companion.

CHAPTER XI.

His eyes had grown accustomed to the glare of the sands, but his sense of beauty was never satisfied. The desert pictures, the glory and the loveliness of the melancholy waste were fully inexhaustible. Standing in the door of his tent in fatigue uniform, he said to Pichioni:

"I could be perfectly happy here if I were not alone."

Pichioni barked. He had not grown accustomed to the desert. He hated it. It slipped away from under his little feet; he could not run on it with any comfort. He spent his days idly in his master's tent, or royally perched on a camel, crouching close to Sabron's manservant when they went on caravan explorations.

"Yes," said Sabron, "if I were not alone. I don't mean you, *mon vicux*. You are a great deal, but you really don't count, you know!"

Before his eyes the sands were as pink as countless rose leaves. To Sabron they were as fragrant as flowers. The peculiar incenselike odor that hovers above the desert when the sun declines was to him the most delicious thing he had ever inhaled. The west was as red as fire. The day had been hot, and at evening there sprang up the cool breeze preceding a delicious night. Overhead, one by one, he watched the blossoming out of the great stars; each one hung above his lonely tent like a bridal flower in a veil of blue. On all sides, like white petals on the desert face, were the tents of his men and his officers, and from the encampment came the hum of military life, yet the silence was profound. He had only to order his stallion saddled and to ride away for

a little distance in order to be alone with the absolute stillness.

This he often did, and took his thoughts with him, and came back to his tent more conscious of his solitude every night of his life.

There had been much looting of caravans in the region, by brigands, and his business was that of sentinel for the commerce of the plains. Thieving and rapacious tribes were under his eye and his care. To-night, as he stood looking toward the west into the glow, shading his eyes with his hand, he saw coming toward them what he knew to be a caravan, from Algiers. His *ordonnance* was a native soldier, one of the desert tribes, black as ink.

"Mustapha," Sabron ordered, "fetch me out a lounge chair." He spoke in French and pointed, for the man understood imperfectly, and Sabron did not yet speak Arab.

He threw himself down, lit a fresh cigarette, dragged Pichioni by the nape of his neck up to his lap, and the two sat watching the caravan slowly grown into individuals of camels and riders, and finally mass itself in shadow within some four or five hundred yards of the encampment.

The sentinels and the soldiers began to gather, and Sabron saw a single footman making his way toward the camp.

"Go," he said to Mustapha, "and see what message the fellow brings to the regiment."

Mustapha went, and after a little returned, followed by the man himself, a black, half-naked Bedouin, swathed in a dust-colored burnoose, and carrying, with both hands clasped over it, a bag.

He bowed to Captain De Sabron, and extended the leather bag. On the outside of the leather there was a ticket pasted, which read:

The Post for the ——— Squadron of Cavalry.

Sabron answered mentally:

"Wherever they may happen to be."

He ordered baksheesh given to the man, and sent him off. Then he opened the French mail. He was not more than three hundred miles from Algiers. It had taken him a long time to work down

the Dirbar, however, and they had had some hardships. He felt a million miles away. The look of the primitive mail bag, and the knowledge of how far it had traveled to find the people to whom these letters were addressed, made his hands reverent as he unfastened the sealed labels. He looked the letters through, returned the bag to Mustapha, and sent him off to distribute the post.

Then, for the light was bad, brilliant though the night might be, he went in with his own mail. On his dressing table was a small illumination, consisting of a thick candle set in a glass case. Pichioni followed him, and lay down on a rush mat by the side of Sabron's military bed, while the soldier read his letter.

MONSIEUR: I regret more than ever that I cannot write your language perfectly. But even in my own I could not find any word to express how badly I feel over something which has happened.

I took the best of care of Pichioni. I thought I did, but I could not make him happy. He mourned terribly. He refused to eat, and one day I was so careless as to open the door for him and we have never seen him since. Your man Gaston comes sometimes to see my maid, and he thinks he has been hurt and died in the woods.

Sabron glanced over to the mat where Pichioni, stretched on his side, his fore-legs wide, was breathing tranquilly.

We have heard rumors of a little dog who was seen running along the highway, miles from Tarascon, but, of course, that could not have been Pichioni.

Sabron nodded. "It was, however, *mon brave*," he said to the terrier.

Not but what I think his little heart was brave enough and valiant enough to have followed you, but no dog could go so far without a better scent.

Sabron said: "It is one of the regrets of my life that you cannot tell us about it. How did you get the scent? How did you follow me?" Pichioni did not stir, and Sabron's eyes returned to the page.

I do not think you will ever forgive us. You left us a trust, and we did not guard it.

He put the letter down a moment, brushed some of the flies away from the

candle, and made the wick brighter. Mustapha came in, black as ebony, his woolly head bare. He stood as stiff as a ramrod, and as black. In his childlike French he said:

"Monsieur le Lieutenant asks if Monsieur le Capitaine will come to play a game of a *carte* in the mess tent?"

"No," said Sabron, without turning. "Not to-night." He went on with his letter:

- A sacred trust.

Half aloud he murmured: "I left a very sacred trust at the Château Des Mille Fleurs, mademoiselle; but as no one knew anything about it there will be no question of guarding it, I dare say."

So I write you this letter to tell you about darling Pichioni. I had grown to love him, though he did not like me. I miss him terribly. My aunt asks me to say that she hopes you had a fine crossing, and that you will send us a tiger skin; but I am sure there are no tigers near Algiers. I say—

And Sabron did not know how long Miss Redmond's pen had hesitated in writing the closing lines:

I say I hope you will be successful, and that although nothing can take the place of Pichioni, you will find some one to make the desert less solitary. Sincerely yours,
JULIA REDMOND.

When Sabron had read the letter several times he kissed it fervently, and put it in his pocket next his heart.

"That," he said to Pichioni, making the dog an unusual confidence, "that will keep me less lonely. At the same time, it makes me more so. This is a paradox, *mon vieux*, which you cannot understand."

CHAPTER XII.

It took the better part of three evenings to answer her letter, and the writing of it gave Sabron a vast amount of pleasure, and some tender sorrow. It made him feel at once so near to this lovely unknown woman, and at once so far away. In truth, there is a great difference between a spahi on an African desert, with its dangers, and a young American heiress dreaming in her

chintz-covered bedroom in a château in the Midi of France.

Notwithstanding, the young American heiress felt herself as much alone in her chintz-covered bedroom, and as desolate, perhaps more so, than did Sabron in his tent. Julia Redmond felt, too, that she was surrounded by people hostile to her friend.

Sabron's letter told her of Pichioni, and was written as only the hand of a charming and imaginative Frenchman can write a letter. Also, his pent-up heart and his reserve made what he did say stronger than if perhaps he could have expressed it quite clearly.

Julia Redmond turned the sheets which told of Pichioni's following his master, and colored with joy and pleasure as she read. She wiped away two tears at the end, where Sabron said:

Think of it, mademoiselle, a little dog following his master from peace and plenty, from quiet and security, into the desert! And think what it means to have this little friend!

Julia Redmond reflected, was greatly touched, and loved Pichioni more than ever. She would have changed places with him gladly. It was an honor, a distinction to share a soldier's exile, and to be his companion. Then Sabron wrote, in closing words, which she read and re-read many, many times:

Mademoiselle, in this life many things follow us; certain of these follow us whether we will or not. Some things we are strong enough to forbid, yet we do not forbid them! My little dog followed me. I had nothing to do with that. It was a question of fate. Something else has followed me as well. It is not a living thing, and yet it has all the qualities of vitality. It is a tune. From the moment I left the château the first night I had the joy of seeing you, mademoiselle, the tune you sang became a companion to me and has followed me everywhere—followed me to my barracks, followed me across the sea, and here in my tent it keeps me company. I find that when I wake at night the melody sings to me; I find that when I mount my horse and ride with my men, when the desert's sands are shifted by my horses' feet, something sings in the sun and in the heat; something sings in the chase and in the pursuit, and in the nights, under the stars, the same air haunts me still.

I am glad you told me what the words meant, for I find them beautiful; the music

would not be the same without the strength and form of the words. So it is, mademoiselle, with life. Feelings and sentiments, passions and emotions, are like music. They are great and beautiful; they follow us, they are part of us, but they would be nothing—music would be nothing without forms by which we could make it audible—appealing not to our senses alone, but to our souls!

And yet I must close my letter, sending you only the tune; the words I cannot send you, yet believe me, they form part of everything I do or say.

To-morrow, I understand from my men, we shall have some lively work to do. Whatever that work is you will hear of it through the papers. There is a little town near here called Dirbar, inhabited by a poor tribe whose lives have been made miserable by robbers and slave dealers. It is the business of us, watchers of the plains, to protect them, and I believe we shall have a lively skirmish with the marauders. There is a congregation of tribes coming down from the north. When I go out with my people to-morrow it may be into danger, for in a wandering life like this who can tell? I do not mean to be either morbid or sentimental. I only mean to be serious, mademoiselle, and I find that I am becoming so serious that it will be best to close.

Adieu, mademoiselle. When you look from your window on the Rhone Valley and see the peaceful fields of Tarascon, when you look on your peaceful gardens, perhaps your mind will travel farther and you will think of Africa. Do so if you can, and perhaps to-night you will say the words only of the song before you go to sleep.

I am, mademoiselle, *toujours à vous*,
CHARLES DE SABRON.

There was only one place for a letter such as that to rest, and it rested on that gentle pillow for many days. It proved a heavy weight against Julia Redmond's heart. She could, indeed, speak the words of the song, and did, and they rose as a nightly prayer for a soldier on the plains; but she could not keep her mind and thoughts at rest. She was troubled and unhappy; she grew pale and thin; she pined more than Pichioni had pined, and she, alas! could not break her chains and run away.

The Duc De Tremont was a constant guest at the house, but he found the American heiress a very capricious and uncertain lady, and Madame Des Mille Fleurs was severe with her niece.

"My dear Julia," she said to the beautiful girl, looking at her through her lorgnon, "I don't understand you.

Every one of your family has married a title. We have not thought that we could do better with our money than build up fortunes already started, than in preserving noble races and noble names. There has never been a divorce in our family. I am a marquise, your cousin is a countess, your aunt is one of the peeresses of England, and as for you, my dear——"

Miss Redmond was standing by the piano. She had lifted the cover, and was about to sit down to play. She slightly smiled at her aunt, and seemed in the moment to be the older woman.

"There are titles and titles, *ma tante*. The only question is what kind do you value the most?"

"The highest!" said her aunt, without hesitation. "And the Duc De Tremont is undoubtedly one of the most famous partis in Europe."

"He will then find no difficulty in marrying," said the young girl, "and I do not wish to marry a man I do not love."

She sat down at the piano, and her hands touched the keys. Her aunt, who was doing some dainty tapestry, whose fingers were creating silken flowers, and whose mind was busy with fancies and ambitions very like the work she created, shrugged her shoulders.

"That seems to be," she said keenly, "the only tune you know, Julia."

"It's a pretty song, *ma tante*."

"I remember that you played and sang it the first night Sabron came to dinner." The girl continued to finger among the chords. "And since then never a day passes that some time or other you do not play it through."

"It has become a sort of oraison, *ma tante*."

"Sabron," said the marquise, "is a fine young man, my child, but he has nothing but his officer's pay. Moreover, a soldier's life is a precarious one."

Julia Redmond played the song softly through.

The old butler came in with the evening mail and the papers. The Marquise Des Mille Fleurs opened with her embroidery scissors *Le Temps*, from Paris, and began, with her usual interest, to

read. She approached the little lamp on the table near her, unfolded the paper, and looked over at her niece, and, after a few moments, said, with a slightly softened voice:

"Julia!" Miss Redmond stopped playing. "Julia." The girl rose from the piano stool and stood with her hand on the instrument.

"My dear Julia." Madame Des Mille Fleurs spread *Le Temps* out, and put her hand on it. "As I said to you, my child, the life of a soldier is a precarious one."

"*Ma tante*!" breathed Miss Redmond from where she stood. "Tell me what the news is from Africa. I think I know what you mean."

As she could not trust herself to walk across the floor, for Julia Redmond in that moment of suspense found the room swimming, she waited, holding on to the instrument whose music had charmed the young man now on the desert.

"There has been an engagement," said the marquise gently, for in spite of her ambitions she loved her niece, and knew something of her words of life without which no music has any value, as Sabron said. "There has been an engagement, Julia, at Dirbar." She lifted the newspaper, and held it before her face, and read:

"There has been some hard fighting in the desert, around about Dirbar. The troops commanded by Captain De Sabron were attacked by an overwhelming force of natives at noon on Thursday, and were forced to retreat rapidly to escape annihilation. There was great loss of life among the natives, but the regiment also suffered severely. There has been no late or authentic news from Dirbar, but the last dispatches give the department of war to understand that Sabron himself is among the missing."

The Marquise Des Mille Fleurs slowly put down the paper, and rose quickly. She went to the young girl's side, and put her arm around her. Miss Redmond covered her face with her hands.

"*Ma tante, ma tante*," she murmured.

"My dear Julia," said the old lady, "there is nothing more uncertain than newspaper reports, especially those that come from the African seat of war. Sit down here, my child."

The two women sat down together on the long piano stool. The marquise said:

"I followed the fortunes, my dear, of my husband's cousin through the engagement in Tonkin. I know a little what it was." The girl was immovable. Her aunt felt her rigid by her side. "I told you," she murmured, "that a soldier's life was a precarious one."

Miss Redmond threw away all disguise.

"*Ma tante*," she said, in a hard voice, "I love him! You must have known it and seen it. I love him!"

As the marquise looked at the girl's face and saw her trembling lips and her wide eyes, she renounced her ambitions for Julia Redmond. She renounced them, with a sigh, but she was a woman of the world. She remained for a moment in silence, holding Julia's hands.

She had followed the campaign of her husband's cousin, a young man with an insignificant title whom she had not married. In a moment she had lived again the arrival of the evening papers; the dispatches, her husband's news of his cousin—indifferent news—news brought by never-mind-whom and gathered as one could. As she kissed Julia's cheeks, a moisture passed over her own eyes, which for many years had shed no tears.

"Courage, my dear," she implored; "we will telegraph at once to the minister of war for news."

The girl drew a convulsive breath, and turned, and, leaning both elbows on the piano keys—perhaps on the very notes whose music in the little song had charmed Sabron—she burst into tears. The marquise rose, and passed out of the room, to send a man with a dispatch to Tarascon.

CHAPTER XIII.

There must be a real philosophy in all proverbs. "Every dog has his day" is a significant one. It surely was for Pichioni. He had his day. It was a glorious one, a terrible one, a memorable one, and he played his little part in it. He awoke at the gray dawn, spring-

ing like a flash from the foot of Sabron's bed, where he lay asleep, in response to the sound of the reveille, and Sabron sprang up after him.

Pichioni in a few moments was in the center of real disorder. All he knew was that he followed his master all day long. The dog's knowledge did not comprehend the fact that not only had the native village of which his master spoke in his letter to Miss Redmond been destroyed, but that Sabron's regiment itself was menaced by a concerted and concentrated attack from an entire tribe, led by a fanatic as hot-minded and as fierce as the Mahdi of Sudanese history.

Pichioni followed at the heels of his master's horse. No one paid any attention to him. Heaven knows why he was not trampled to death, but he was not. No one trod on him; no horse's hoof hit his little wiry form that managed in the midst of carnage and death to keep itself secure. He smelled the gunpowder, he smelled the smoke, sniffed at it, threw up his pretty head, and barked, puffed, and panted, yelped and tore about and followed. He was not conscious of anything but that Sabron was in motion, that Sabron, his beloved master, was in action of some kind or other, and he, a soldier's dog, was in action, too. He howled at fierce, dark faces, when he saw them. He snarled at the bullets that whistled around his ears, and, laying his little ears back, he shook his black muzzle in the very grin of death.

Sabron's horse was shot under him, and then Pichioni saw his master, sprang upon him, and his feelings were not hurt that no attention was paid him, not even his name called, and, as Sabron struggled on, Pichioni followed. It was his day; he was fighting the natives; he was part of a battle; he was a soldier's dog! Little by little the creatures and things around him grew fewer, the smoke cleared and rolled away, there were a few feet of freedom around him in which he stood and barked; then he was off again close to his master's heels, and not too soon. He did not know the blow that struck Sabron, but he

saw him fall, and then there came into his canine heart some knowledge of the importance of his day. He had raced himself weary. Every bone in his little body ached with fatigue.

Sabron lay his length on the bed of the dried-up river, one of those phantomlike channels of a desert stream whose course runs watery only certain times of the year. Sabron, wounded in the abdomen, lay upon his side. Pichioni smelled him from head to foot, addressed himself to his restoration in his own way. He licked his face, and hands, and ears, sat sentinel at the beloved head where the forehead was covered with sweat and blood. He barked feverishly, and to his attentive ears there came no answer whatsoever, either from the wounded man in the bed of the African river or from the silent plains.

Sabron was deserted. He had fallen and not been missed, and his regiment, routed by the Arabs, had been driven into retreat. Finally the little dog, who knew by instinct that life remained in his master's body, set himself at work vigorously to awaken a sign of life. He attacked Sabron's shoulder as though it was a prey; he worried him, barked in his ear, struck him lightly with his paw, and finally, awakening to dreadful pain, to fever, and to isolation, awakened perhaps to the battle for life, to the attentions of his friend, the soldier opened his eyes.

Sabron's wound was serious, but his body was vigorous, strong, and healthy, and his mind more so. There was a film over it just now. He raised himself with great effort, and in a moment realized where he was, and that to linger there was a horrible death. On each side of the river rose an inclined bank, not very high, and thickly grown with mimosa bush. This meant to him that beyond it, and probably within easy reach, there would be shade from the intense and dreadful glare beating down upon him, with death in every ray. He groaned, and Pichioni's voice answered him.

Sabron paid no attention to his dog, did not even call his name. His mind, accustomed to quick decisions and to

a matter-of-fact consideration of life, instantly took its proper course. He must get out of the river bed or die there.

What there was before him to do was so stupendous an undertaking that it made him almost unconscious of the pain in his loins. He could not stand, could not thoroughly raise himself; but by great and painful effort, bleeding at every move he could crawl; he did so, and the sun beat upon him. Pichioni walked by his side, whining, talking to him, encouraging him, and the soldier, ashen pale, his bright gray uniform ripped and stained, all alone in the desert, with death above him and death on every hand, crawled, dragged, hitched along out of the river to the bank, cheered, encouraged by his little dog.

For a drop of water he would have given—oh, what had he to give? For a little shade, he would have given! About all he had to give had been given to his duty in this engagement which could never bring him glory, or distinction, or any renown. The work of a spahi with a native regiment is not a very glorious affair. He was simply an officer who fell doing his daily work.

Pichioni barked and cried out to him: "Courage!"

"I shall die here at the foot of the mimosa," Sabron thought; and his hands hardly had the courage or strength to grasp the first bushes by which he meant to pull himself up the bank. The little dog was close to him, leaping, springing near him, and Sabron did not know how tired, and thirsty, and exhausted his brave little companion was, or that, perhaps, in that heroic little body there was as much of a soldier's soul as in his own human form.

The sun was so hot that it seemed to sing in the bushes. Its torrid fever struck on his brow, struck on his chest. Why did it not kill him? He was not even delirious, and yet the bushes sang dry and cackling. What was their melody? He knew it. Just one melody haunted him always, and now he knew the words: they were a prayer for safety.

"But," Sabron said, aloud, "it is a

prayer to be said at night, and not in the afternoon of an African hell."

He began to climb, he pulled himself along, leaving his track in blood.

He fainted twice, and the thick growth held him like the wicker of a cradle, and before he came to his consciousness the sun mercifully went down. He finally reached the top of the bank, and lay there, panting. Not far distant were the bushes of rose and mimosa flower, and, still panting, weaker and ever weaker, his courage the only living thing in him, Sabron, with Pichioni by his side, dragged himself there.

All that night Sabron was delirious; his mind traveled far, into vague, fantastic countries, led back again, ever, gently by a tune, to safety.

Every now and then he would realize that he was alone on the vast desert, destined to finish his existence here, to cease being a human creature, and to become nothing but carrion. Moments of consciousness succeeded those of mental disorder. Every now and then he would feel Pichioni close to his arm. The dog licked his hand, and the touch was grateful to the deserted officer. Pichioni licked his master's cheek, and Sabron felt that there was another life beside his in the wilderness. Neither dog nor man could long exist, however, without food or drink, and Sabron was growing momentarily weaker.

The Frenchman, something of a philosopher, was distinctly a man of sentiment and fine feeling, and he realized how hard it was to die unsatisfied in love, unsatisfied in life, having accomplished nothing, having wished many things, and realized at an early age only death! Then this point of view changed, and the physical man alone was uppermost.

He groaned for water, he groaned for relief from pain, turned his head from side to side, and Pichioni whined softly. Sabron was not strong enough to speak to him, and the voices of man and beast, inarticulate, mingled—both left to die in the open.

Then Sabron violently rebelled, and cried out in his soul against fate and destiny. He could have cursed the day

he was born. Keenly desirous to live, to make his mark and to win everything a man values, why should he be picked and chosen for this lonely, pathetic end? Moreover, he did not wish to suffer like this, to lose his grasp on life, to go on into wilder delirium, and to die! He knew enough of injuries to feel sure that his wound alone could not kill him. When he had first dragged himself into the shade, he had fainted, and when he came to himself he might have stanching his blood. His wound was hardly bleeding now. Fatigue and thirst, fever would finish him, not his hurt. He was too young to die.

With great effort he raised himself on his arm, and scanned the desert stretching on all sides like a rosy sea. Along the river bank the pale and delicate blossom and leaf of the mimosa lay like a bluish veil, and the smell of the evening, and the smell of the mimosa flower, and the perfumes of the weeds came to him, aromatic and sweet. Above his head, the blue sky was ablaze with stars, and directly over him the evening star hung like a crystal lamp. But there was no beauty in it for the wounded officer who looked in vain to the dark shadows on the desert which might mean approaching human life. It would be better to die as he was dying, than to be found by the enemy!

The sea of waste rolled, unbroken, as far as his fading eyes could reach. He sank back, with a sigh, not to rise again, and closed his eyes and waited. He slept a short, restless, feverish sleep, and in it dreams chased one another like those evoked by a narcotic, but out of them, over and over again, came the picture of Julia Redmond, and she sang to him the song whose words now meant a prayer for the safety of a beloved one during the night.

From that romantic melody there seemed to rise more solemn ones. He heard the rolling of the organ in the wonderful cathedral in his native town, for he came from Rouen originally. The music rolled and rolled, and passed over the desert's face. It seemed to lift his spirit, and to cradle it. Then he breathed his prayers—they took form,

and in his sleep he repeated the Ave Maria and the Pater Noster, and the words rolled and rolled over the desert's face, and the supplication seemed to his feverish mind to mingle with the stars.

A sort of midnight dew fell upon him: so at least he thought, and it seemed to him a heavenly dew, and to cover him like a benignant rain. He grew cooler. He prayed again, and with his words there came to the young man an ineffable sense of peace. He pilloved his fading thoughts upon it; he pillowed his aching mind upon it, and his body, too, and the pain of his wound, and he thought aloud, with only the night airs to hear him, in broken sentences: "If this is death, it is not so bad. One should rather be afraid of life. This is not difficult, and if I should ever get out of here I shall not regret this night."

Toward morning, he grew calmer; he turned to speak to his little companion. In his troubled thoughts he had forgotten Pichioni.

Sabron faintly called him. There was no response. Then the soldier listened in silence. It was absolutely unbroken. Not even the call of a nightbird—not even the cry of a hyena—nothing came to him but the inarticulate voice of the desert. Great and solemn awe crept up to him, crept up to him like a spirit, and sat down by his side. He felt his hands grow cold, and his feet grow cold. Now, unable to speak aloud, there passed through his mind that this indeed was death, desertion absolute in the heart of the plains.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Marquise Des Mille Fleurs saw that she had to reckon with an American girl. Those who know them know what their temper and metal are, and that they are capable of the finest reverberations.

Julia Redmond was very young. Otherwise she would never have let Sabron go without one sign that she was not indifferent to him, and that she was rather bored with the idea of titles and fortunes. But she adored her aunt, and

saw, moreover, something else than ribbons and velvets in the make-up of the aunt. She saw deeper than the polish which a long Parisian lifetime had overlaid, and she loved what she saw. She respected her aunt, and, knowing the older lady's point of view, had been timid and hesitating until now.

Now the American girl woke up, or, rather, asserted herself.

"What a practical girl she is," thought the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs. "She seems ten years older than I. She is cut out to be the wife of a poor man. It is a pity she should have a fortune. Julia would have been charming with love in a cottage, whereas I——"

She recalled her hôtel on the Parc Monceau, her château by the Rhone, her villa at Biarritz, and sighed. She had not always been the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs; she had been an American girl first, and remembered that her maiden name had been De Puyster, and that she had come from Schenectady originally. But for many years she had forgotten these things.

Sabron had not been found.

It was a curious fact, and one which has transpired now and then in the history of desert wars—the man is lost. The captain of the cavalry was missing, and the only news of him was that he had fallen in an engagement, and that his body had never been recovered. Several sorties had been made to find him; the war department had done all that it could; he had disappeared from the face of the desert, and even his bones could not be found.

From the moment that Julia Redmond had confessed her love for the soldier, a courage had been born in her which never faltered, and her aunt had been infected by it. She grew sentimental, found out that she was more docile and impressionable than she had believed herself to be, and the veneer and etiquette—no doubt never a very real part of her—became less important than other things. For a few weeks she'd been more a De Puyster, from Schenectady, than the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs.

"*Ma tante*," Julia Redmond had said

to her when the last telegram was brought in to the Château Des Mille Fleurs, "I shall leave for Africa to-morrow."

"My dear Julia!"

"He is alive! God will not let him die. Besides, I have prayed. I believe in God, don't you?"

"Of course, my dear Julia."

"Well," said the girl, whose pale cheeks, and trembling hands that held the telegram, made a sincere impression on her aunt, "well, then, if you believe, why do you doubt that he is alive? He needs care, I am sure; some one must find him. Will you tell Eugène to have the motor here in an hour? The boat sails to-morrow, *ma tante*."

The marquise rolled her embroidery, and put it aside for twelve months.

"My dear Julia, a young and handsome woman cannot follow, like a daughter of the regiment, after the fortunes of a soldier."

"But a Red Cross nurse can, *ma tante*, and I have my diploma."

"The boat leaving to-morrow, my dear Julia, doesn't take passengers."

"Oh, *ma tante*! There will be no other boat for Algiers," she opened the newspaper, "until—oh, heavens!"

"But Robert De Tremont's yacht is in the harbor."

Miss Redmond looked at her aunt speechlessly.

"I will telegraph Madame De Hausseville, and ask permission for you to go in there as an auxiliary of the Red Cross to Algiers. Or, rather, Robert is at Nice; I will telegraph him."

"Oh, *ma tante*!"

"He asked me to make up my own party for a cruise on the Mediterranean," said the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs thoughtfully.

Miss Redmond fetched the telegraph blank and the pad from the table. The color began to return to her cheeks. She put from her mind the idea that her aunt had plans for her. All ways were fair in the present situation.

The Marquise Des Mille Fleurs wrote her dispatch, a very long one, slowly. She said to her servant:

"Call up the Villa Des Perroquets, at

Nice. I wish to speak with the Duc De Tremont." She then drew her niece very gently to her side, looking up at her as a mother might have looked. "Darling Julia, Monsieur De Sabron has never told you that he loved you?"

Julia shook her head.

"Not in words, *ma tante*."

There was a silence, and then Julia Redmond said:

"I only want to assure myself that he is safe, that he lives. I only wish to know his fate."

"But if you go to him like this, *ma chérie*, he will think you love him. He *must* marry you! You are making a serious declaration."

"Ah," breathed the girl from between trembling lips, "don't go on. I shall be shown the way."

The Marquise Des Mille Fleurs then said, musing:

"I shall telegraph to England for provisions. Food is vile in Algiers. Also, Melanie must get out all our summer clothes."

"*Ma tante*!" said Julia Redmond. "Our summer clothes?"

"Did you think you were going alone, my dear Julia?"

She had been so thoroughly the American girl that she had thought of nothing but going. She threw her arms around her aunt's neck with an abandon that made the latter young again. The Marquise Des Mille Fleurs kissed her niece tenderly.

"*Madame la Marquise, Monsieur le Duc De Tremont est au telephone*," the servant announced to her from the doorway.

CHAPTER XV.

From her steamer chair, the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs asked:

"Are you absorbed in your book, Julia?"

Miss Redmond faintly smiled as she laid it down. She was absorbed in but one thing, morning, noon, and night, waking or sleeping; when and where she should find him; how was he being treated. Had he been taken captive? He was not dead, of that she was sure.

"What is the book, Julia?"

"*'Le Conte d'un Spahi,' ma tante.*"

"Put it down, and let me speak to you of Robert De Tremont."

Miss Redmond, being his guest and indebted to him for her luxurious transportation, could not, in decency, refuse the request.

"He knows nothing whatever of our errand, Julia."

"Ah?" Then, what does he think, *ma tante*?"

Miss Redmond, on the arm of her blue serge coat, wore a band of white, in the center of which gleamed the red cross. The marquise, wrapped in a sable rug, held a small Pekingese lap dog cuddled under her arm, and had only the appearance of a lady of leisure bent on a pleasure excursion. She did not suggest a rescuing party in the least. Her jaunty hat was enveloped by a delicate veil; her hands were encased in long white gloves. Now that she had encouraged her energetic niece and taken this decisive step, she relaxed, and found what pleasure she might in the voyage.

"When we came on board last night, my dear, you remember that I sat with Robert in the saloon until—well, latish."

"After midnight, *ma tante chérie.*"

"Possibly; but I am fifty, and he is thirty. Moreover, I am his godmother. He is enchanting, Julia, spirituelle and sympathetic. I confess, my dear, that I find myself rather at a loss as to what to tell him."

Miss Redmond listened politely. She was supremely indifferent as to what had been told to her host. This was Tuesday; they should reach Algiers on Saturday at the latest. What news would meet them there? She held in her book the last dispatch from the ministry of war. Supposing the Captain De Sabron had been taken captive by some marauding tribe and was being held for a ransom! This was the "Romance of a Spahi," in which she was absorbed. *Taken captive!* She could not let herself think what that might mean.

"Robert's mother, you know, the old duchess, is my closest friend. His father was one of the witnesses of my marriage. I feel that I have brought up

Robert—it would have been so perfect." She sighed.

"*Ma tante!*" warned Miss Redmond, with a note of pain in her voice.

"Yes, yes," accepted the marquise, "I know, my dear, I know. But you cannot escape from the yacht except in a lifeboat, and if you *did*, it would be one of Robert's lifeboats! You must not be too formal with him." She tapped the nose of her Pekingese dog. "Be still, Mimi, that man is only a sailor! And if he were not here and at his duty you would be drowned, you little goose!"

The Pekingese dog was a new addition. Julia tried not to dislike him; for Julia, only Pichioni existed. She could not touch Mimi without a sense of disloyalty.

The boat cut the azure water with its delicate white body, the decks glistened like glass. The sailor at whom Mimi had barked passed out of sight, and far up in the bow Tremont stood, smoking, in white flannels.

"I had to be very circumspect, my dear Julia, when I talked with Robert. You see, you are not engaged to Monsieur De Sabron." The girl colored. "The sentimental woman in me," her aunt went on, "has responded to all your fantasies, but the practical woman in me calls me a romantic goose."

"Ah!" breathed Miss Redmond, opening her book. "*Ma tante*, let me read."

"Nonsense," said the marquise affectionately. "The most important part of the whole affair is that we are here, that we are en route to Algiers, is it not?"

The girl extended her hand gratefully. "I thank you, *ma tante*. Go on. Tell me, what did you say to him?"

The marquise hummed a little tune, and softly pulled Mimi's ears.

"Remember, my child, that if we find Monsieur Sabron, the circumspexion will have to be even greater still."

"Leave that to me, *ma tante.*"

"You don't know," said the determined lady, quite sweetly, "that he has the *slightest* desire to marry you, Julia."

Miss Redmond sat up in her chair, and flamed.

"Do you want to make me miserable?"

"I intend to let my worldly wisdom

be equal to this emergency, Julia. I want Robert to have no idea or suspicion of the facts."

"How can we prevent it, *ma tante*?"

"We can do so if you will obey me."

The girl started, and her aunt, looking up at the Duc De Tremont where he stood in the bow, saw that he showed signs of finishing his smoke and of joining them.

"*Ma tante*," said the girl quickly, "have you brought me here under false colors? Have you let him think——"

"Hush! Julia, you are indebted to him for accomplishing your own desire."

"But I would never, never——"

"*Petite sotte!*" said the marquise. "Then you would *never* have been on this yacht."

Intensely troubled and annoyed, Julia asked in a low tone:

"For Heaven's sake, *ma tante*, tell me what the Duc De Tremont thinks!"

Her aunt laughed softly. The intrigue and romance of it all entertained her. She had the sense of having made a very pretty concession to her niece, of having accomplished a very agreeable pleasure trip for herself. As for young Sabron, he would be sure to be discovered at the right moment, to be lionized, decorated, and advanced. The reason that she had no wrinkles on her handsome cheek was because she went lightly through life.

"He thinks, my dearest girl, that you are like all your countrywomen: a little eccentric, and that you have a strong mind. He thinks you one of the most tender-hearted and benevolent of girls."

"*Ma tante, ma tante!*"

"He thinks you are making a little mission into Algiers among the sick and the wounded. He thinks you are going to sing in the hospitals."

"But," exclaimed the girl, "he must think me mad, *ma tante!*"

"Young men don't care how mildly mad a beautiful young woman is, my dear Julia."

"But he will find out—he will know."

"No," said the marquise, "that he will not. I have attended to that. He will not leave his boat during the excursion,

Julia. He remains, and we go on shore with our people."

"How splendid!" sighed Julia Redmond, relieved.

"I'm glad you think so," said her aunt, rather shortly. "Now, I have a favor to ask you, my child."

Julia trembled.

"*Ma tante?*"

"While we are on board the yacht you will treat Robert charmingly."

"I am always polite to him, am I not?"

"You are like an irritated sphinx to him, my dear. You must be different."

"I thought," said the girl, in a subdued voice, "that it would be like this. Oh, I wish I had sailed on any vessel, even a cargo vessel."

Looking at her gently, her aunt said:

"Don't be ridiculous. I only wish to protect you, my child. I think I have proved my friendship. Remember, before the world, you are nothing to Charles Sabron. A woman's heart, my dear, has delusions as well as passions." The girl crimsoned, and bowed her charming head. "You are not called upon to tell Robert De Tremont that you are in love with a man who has not asked you to marry him; but you are his guest, and all I ask of you is that you make the voyage as agreeable to him as you can, my dear."

Tremont was coming toward them. Julia raised her head, and murmured:

"I thank you, *ma tante*, for everything. I will do what I can." And to herself she said: "That is, as far as my honor will let me."

CHAPTER XVI.

The short journey to Africa, over a calm and perfect sea, whose waters were voices at her port to solace her, and where the stars alone glowed down like friends upon her, and to understand—was a torture to Julia Redmond. To herself she called her aunt cruel, over and over again, and felt a prisoner, a caged creature.

Tremont was almost in love with her. He found her charming, though, in this rôle of Florence Nightingale, she puzzled and perplexed him. She was, nev-

ertheless, adorable. The young man had the good sense to make a discreet courtship, and understood she would not be easily won.

Until they reached Algiers, indeed, until the night before they disembarked, he had not said one word to her which might not have been shared by her aunt. In accordance with the French custom, they never were alone. The marquise shut her eyes and napped considerably, and gave them every opportunity she could, but she was always present.

The Duc De Tremont had been often in love during his short life. He was a Latin, and thought that women are made to be loved. It was part of his education to think this, and to tell them this, and he also believed it a proof of his good taste to tell them this as soon as possible.

He was a thoroughly fine fellow. Some of his forefathers had fought and fallen at Agincourt. They had been dukes ever since. There was something distinctly noble in the blond young man, and Julia discovered it. Possibly she had felt it from the first. Some women are keen to feel. Perhaps if she had *not* felt it she might even have hesitated to go to Algiers as his guest.

From the moment that the old duchess had said to Robert De Tremont:

"Julia Redmond is a great catch, my dear boy; I should like to have you marry her," her son answered:

"*Bien, ma mère,*" with cheerful acquiescence, and immediately considered it, and went to Tarascon, to the Château Des Mille Fleurs.

When his mother had suggested the visit, he told her that he intended making up a party for the Mediterranean.

"Why don't you take your godmother and the American girl. Miss Redmond has an income of nearly a million, and they say she is well-bred."

"Very good, *ma mère.*"

When he saw Miss Redmond, he found her lovely. Not so lovely as the Comtesse De La Maine, whose invitation to dinner he had refused on the day his mother suggested the Château Des Mille Fleurs. The comtesse was a widow. It is not very, very *comme il*

faut to marry a widow in the Faubourg St. Germain. Miss Redmond's beauty was different. She was self-absorbed and cold. He did not understand her at all, but that was the *American* of her.

One of his friends had married an American girl, and found out afterward that she chewed gum before breakfast. *Pauvre Raymond!* Miss Redmond did not suggest such possibilities. Still, she was very different from a French *jeune fille*.

With his godmother he was entirely at ease. Ever since she had paid his debts when he was a young man, he had adored her. Tremont, always discreet and almost in love with his godmother, kept her in a state of great good humor always, and when she had suggested to him this little party, he had been delighted. In speaking over the telephone, the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs had said very firmly:

"My dear Robert, you understand that this excursion engages you to nothing."

"Oh, of course, *marraine.*"

"We both need a change, and, between ourselves, Julia has a little mission on foot."

Tremont would be delighted to help Miss Redmond carry it out. Whom else should he ask?

"By all means, any one you like," said his godmother diplomatically. "We want to sail the day after to-morrow."

She felt safe, knowing that no worldly people would accept an invitation on twenty-four hours' notice.

"So," the Duc De Tremont reflected, as he hung up the telephone, "Miss Redmond has a scheme, a mission? Young girls do not have schemes and missions in good French society. Perhaps she does chew gum before breakfast!"

"Mademoiselle," he said to her, as they walked up and down on the deck in the pale sunset, in front of the chair of the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs, "I never saw an ornament more becoming to a woman than the one you wear."

"The ornament, monsieur?"

"On your sleeve. It is so beautiful! A string of pearls would not be more beautiful, although your pearls are love-

ly, too. Are all American girls Red Cross members?"

"But of course not, monsieur. Are all girls anywhere one thing?"

"Yes," said the Duc De Tremont, "they are all charming, but there are gradations."

"Do you think that we will reach Algiers to-morrow, monsieur?"

"I hope not, mademoiselle."

Miss Redmond turned her fine eyes on him.

"You hope not?"

"I should like this voyage to last forever, mademoiselle."

"How ridiculous!"

Her look was so frank that he laughed in spite of himself, and, instead of following up the politeness, he asked:

"Why do you think of Algiers as a field for nursing the sick, mademoiselle?"

"There has been quite a deputation of the Red Cross women lately going from Paris to the East."

"But," said the young man, "there are poor in Tarascon, and sick, too. There is a great deal of poverty in Nice, and Paris is the nearest of all."

"The American girls are very imaginative," said Julia Redmond. "We must have some romance in all we do."

"I find the American girls very charming," said Tremont.

"Do you know many, monsieur?"

"Only one," he said serenely.

Miss Redmond changed the subject quickly and cleverly, and before he knew it, Tremont was telling her stories about his own military service, which had been made in Africa. He talked well, and entertained them both, and Julia Redmond listened when he told her of the desert, of its charm and its desolation, and of its dangers. An hour passed. The Marquise Des Mille Fleurs took an antepandrial stroll, Mimi mincing at her heels.

"*Ce pauvre Sabron!*" said De Tremont. "He has disappeared off the face of the earth. What a horrible thing it was, mademoiselle! I knew him in Paris; I remember meeting him again the night before he left the Midi. He

was a fine fellow with a career before him, his friends say."

"What do you think has become of Monsieur De Sabron?"

Miss Redmond, so far, had only been able to ask this question of her aunt and of the stars. None of them had been able to tell her. Tremont shrugged thoughtfully.

"He may have dragged himself away to die in some ambush that they have not discovered, or likely he has been taken captive, *le pauvre diable!*"

"France will do all it can, monsieur."

"They will do all they can, which is to wait. An extraordinary measure, if taken just now, would probably result in Sabron's being put to death by his captors. He may be found to-morrow—he may never be found."

A slight murmur from the young girl beside him made Tremont look at her. He saw that her hands were clasped and her face quite white, her eyes staring fixedly before her, out toward Africa. Tremont said:

"You are compassion itself, mademoiselle, you have a tender heart. No wonder you wear the Red Cross. I am a soldier, mademoiselle. I thank you for all soldiers. I thank you for Sabron—but we must not talk of such things."

He thought her very charming, both romantic and idealistic. She would make a delightful friend. Would she not be too intense for a wife? However, many women of fashion joined the Red Cross.

"My children," said the marquise, coming up to them with Mimi in her arms, "you are as serious as though we were on a boat bound for the north pole, and expected to live on tinned things and salt fish. Aren't you hungry, Julia? Robert, take Mimi to my maid, will you?"

"Julia," said her aunt, as Tremont went away with the little dog, "you look dramatic, my dear, you're pale as death in spite of this divine air and this enchanting sea." She linked her arm through her niece's. "Take a brisk walk with me for five minutes, and whip up your blood. I believe you were on the point of making Tremont some unwise confession."

"I assure you, no, *ma tante*."

"Isn't Bob a darling, Julia?"

"Awfully," returned her niece absent-mindedly.

"He's the most eligible young man in Paris, Julia, and the most difficult to please."

"*Ma tante*," said the girl, in a low tone, "he tells me that France at present can do practically nothing about finding Monsieur De Sabron. Fancy a great army and a great nation helpless for the rescue of a single soldier, and his life at stake!"

"Julia," said the marquise, taking the trembling hand in her own, "you will make yourself ill, my darling, and you will be no use to any one, you know."

"You're right," returned the girl. "I will be silent, and I will only pray."

She turned from her aunt to stand for a few moments quiet, looking out at the sea, at the blue water through which the boat cut and flew. Along the horizon was a mist, rosy and translucent, and out of it white Algiers should shine before many hours.

When Tremont, at luncheon a little later, looked at his guests, he saw a new Julia. She had left her coat with the Red Cross in her cabin with her hat. In her pretty blouse, her pearls around her neck, the soft flush on her cheeks, she was apparently only a light-hearted woman of the world. She teased her aunt gently, she laughed very deliciously, and lightly flirted with the Duc De Tremont who opened a bottle of champagne, and at coffee lit her cigarette for her. The Marquise Des Mille Fleurs beamed upon her niece. Tremont found her more puzzling than ever.

"She suggests the chameleon," he thought, "she has moods. Before, she was the tragic muse; at luncheon she is an adorable sybarite. Does she chew gum before breakfast?"

CHAPTER XVII.

From a dreamy little villa, whose walls were streaming with bougainvilleæ, Miss Redmond looked over Algiers, over the tumult, and hum of it, to the sea. Tremont, by her side, looked

at her. From head to foot the girl was in white. On one side the bougainvilleæ laid its scarlet flowers against the stainless linen of her dress, and on her other arm was the Red Cross.

The American girl and the Frenchman had become the best of friends. She considered him a sincere companion and an unconscious confederate. He had not yet decided what he thought of her, or how. His promise to remain on the yacht had been broken, and he paid his godmother and Miss Redmond constant visits at their villa, which the marquise rented for the season.

There were times when Tremont thought Miss Redmond's exile a fanatical one, but he always found her fascinating, and a lovely woman, and he wondered what it was that kept him from laying his title and his fortune at her feet. It had been understood between the godmother and himself that he was to court Miss Redmond American fashion.

"She has been brought up in such a shocking fashion, Robert, that nothing but American love-making will appeal to her. You will have to make love to her, Robert. Can you do it?"

"But *marraine*, I might as well make love to a *sœur de charité*."

"There was *la belle Héloïse*, and no woman is immune."

"I think she is engaged to some American cowboy who will come and claim her, *marraine*."

His godmother was offended.

"Rubbish!" she said. "She is engaged to no one, Bob. She is an idealist, a *Rosalind*; but that will not prevent her from making an excellent wife."

"She is certainly very beautiful," said the Duc De Tremont, and he told Julia so.

"You are very beautiful," he said to her, as she leaned on the balcony of the villa, the bougainvilleæ pressing against her breast. "When you stood in the hospital under the window and sang to the poor devils you looked like an angel."

"Poor things!" said Julia Redmond. "Do you think that they liked it?"

"Liked it!" exclaimed the young man

enthusiastically. "Couldn't you see by their faces? One poor devil said to me: 'One can die better now, monsieur.' There was no hope for him, it seems."

Tremont and the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs had docilely gone with Julia Redmond every day at a certain hour to the different hospitals, where Julia, after rendering some slight service to the nurses—for she was not needed—sang for the sick, standing in the outer hallway of the building open on every side. She knew that Sabron was not among these sick. Where he was or what sounds his ears might hear she could not know; but she sang for him, and the fact put a sweetness in her voice that touched the ears of the suffering, and uplifted those who were not too far down to be uplifted; and as for the dying, it helped them, as the soldier said, to die.

She had done this for several days, but now she was restless. Sabron was not in Algiers. No news had been brought of him. His regiment had been ordered out farther into the desert that seemed to stretch away into infinity, and the vast, cruel sands knew, and the stars knew where Sabron had fallen, and what was his history, and they kept the secret.

The marquise made herself as much at home as possible in Algiers, put up with the inefficiency of native servants, and her duty was done. Her first romantic élan was over. Sabron had recalled to her the idyl of a love affair of a quarter of a century before, but she had been for too long the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs to go back to an ideal. She pined to have her niece a duchess, and never spoke the unfortunate Sabron's name.

They were surrounded by fashionable life. So soon as their arrival had been made known there had been a flutter of cards and a passing of carriages and automobiles, and this worldly life added to the unhappiness and restlessness of Julia. Among the guests had been one woman whom she found sympathetic; the woman's eyes had drawn Julia to her. It was the Comtesse De La Maine,

a widow, young as herself, and, as Julia said, vastly better-looking. Turning to Tremont on the balcony, when he told her she was beautiful, she said:

"Madame De La Maine is my ideal of loveliness."

The young man wrinkled his fair brow.

"Do you think so, mademoiselle? Why?"

"She has character, as well as perfect lines. Her eyes look as though they could weep, and laugh. Her mouth looks as though it could say adorable things."

Tremont laughed softly, and said:

"Go on, you amuse me."

"And her hands look as though they could caress and comfort. I like her awfully. I wish she were my friend."

Tremont said nothing, and she glanced at him suddenly.

"She says such lovely things about you, monsieur."

"Really! She is too indulgent."

"Don't be worldly," said Miss Redmond gravely. "Be human. I like you best so. Don't you agree with me?"

"Madame De La Maine is a very charming woman," said the young man, and the girl saw what no doubt she was looking for—a change come over his features.

At this moment, as they stood so together, Tremont pulling his mustache and looking out through the bougainvillaea vines, a dark figure made its way through the garden to the villa, came and took its position under the balcony where the duc and Miss Redmond leaned. It was a native, a man in filthy rags. He turned his face to Tremont, and bowed low to the lady.

"Excellency," he said, in broken French, "my name is Hammet Abou. I was the *ordonnance* of Monsieur le Capitaine De Sabron."

"What!" exclaimed De Tremont. "What did you say?"

"Ask him to come up here," said Julia Redmond. "Or, no, let us go down to the garden."

"It is damp," said De Tremont. "Let me get you a shawl."

"No, no, I need nothing."

She had hurried before him down the little stairs leading into the garden from the balcony, and she had begun to speak to the native before Tremont appeared. In this recital he addressed his words to Julia alone.

"I am a very poor man, excellency," he said, in a mellifluous tone, "and very sick."

"Have you any money, monsieur?"

"Pray do not suggest it," said the duc sharply. "Let him tell what he will; we will pay him later."

"I have been very sick," said the man. "I have left the army. I do not like the French army," said the native simply.

"You are very frank," said Tremont brutally. "Why do you come here, at any rate?"

"Hush!" said Julia Redmond imploringly. "Do not anger him, monsieur, he may have news." She asked: "Have you news?" And there was a note in her voice that made Tremont glance at her.

"I have seen the excellency and her grandmother," said the native, "many times going into the garrison."

"What news have you of Le Capitaine De Sabron?" asked the girl directly.

Without replying, the man said, in a melancholy voice:

"I was his *ordonnance*. I saw him fall in the battle of Dirbar. I saw him shot in the side. I was shot, too, see?"

He started to pull away his rags. Tremont clutched him.

"You beast!" he muttered, and pushed him back. "If you have anything to say, say it."

Looking at Julia Redmond's colorless face, the native asked meaningly:

"Does the excellency wish any news?"

"Yes," said Tremont, shaking him. "And if you do not give it, it will be the worse for you."

"Monsieur le Capitaine fell, and I fell, too; I saw no more."

Tremont said:

"You see, the fellow is half lunatic, and it is very unlikely that he knows anything about Sabron. I shall put him out of the garden."

But Miss Redmond paid no attention

to her companion. She controlled her voice, and asked the man:

"Was the Capitaine Sabron alone?"

"Except," said the native steadily, with a glance of disgust at the duc, "except for his little dog."

"Ah!" exclaimed Julia Redmond, with a catch in her voice. "Do you hear that? He must have been his servant. What was the dog's name?"

"My name," said the native, "is Hammet Abou."

To her at this moment Hammet Abou was the most important person in North Africa.

"What was the little dog's name, Hammet Abou?"

The man raised his eyes, and looked at the white woman with admiration.

"Pichioni," he said, and saw the effect.

Tremont saw the effect upon her, too.

"I have a wife and ten children," said the man, "and I live far away."

"Heavens! I haven't my purse," said Julia Redmond. "Will you not give him something, monsieur?"

"Wait," said Tremont, "wait. What else do you know? If your information is worth anything to us we will pay you. Don't be afraid."

"Perhaps the excellency's grandmother would like to hear, too," said the man naively.

Julia Redmond smiled; the youthful Marquise Des Mille Fleurs!

Once more Tremont seized the man by the arm, and shook him a little.

"If you don't tell what you have to say, and be quick about it, my dear fellow, I will hand you over to the police."

"What for?" said the man. "What have I done?"

"Well, what have you got to tell, and how much do you want for it?"

"I want one hundred francs for this." And he pulled out from his dirty rags a little packet, and held it up cautiously.

It looked like a package of letters and a man's pocketbook.

"You take it," said the Duc De Tremont to Julia Redmond, "you take it, mademoiselle."

She did so without hesitating; it was evidently Sabron's pocketbook, a leather

one, with his initials upon it, together with a little package of letters. On the top, she saw her letter to him. Her hand trembled so that she could scarcely hold the package. It seemed to be all that was left to her. She heard Tremont ask:

"Where did you get this, you miserable dog?"

"After the battle," said the man coolly, with evident truthfulness, "I was very sick. We were in camp several days. Then I got better and went along the dried river bank to look for Monsieur le Capitaine, and I found this in the sands."

"Do you believe him?" asked Julia Redmond.

"Hum!" said Tremont. He did not wish to tell her. He thought the man capable of robbing the dead body of his master. He asked the native: "Have you no other news?"

The man was silent. He clutched the rags at his breast, and looked at Julia Redmond.

"Please give him some money, monsieur."

"The dog!" Tremont shook him again. "Not yet." And he said to the man: "If this is all you have to tell, we will give you one hundred francs for this parcel. You can go, and don't return here again, you understand?"

"But it is not all," said the native quietly, looking at Julia.

Her heart began to beat like mad, and she looked at the man. His keen, dark eyes seemed to pierce her.

"Monsieur," said the American girl boldly, "would you leave me a moment with him? I think he wants to speak with me alone."

But the Duc De Tremont exclaimed, in surprise:

"To speak with you alone, mademoiselle! Why should he? Such a thing is not possible!"

"Don't go far," she begged, "but leave us a moment, I pray."

When Tremont, with great hesitation, took a few steps away from him, and she stood face to face with the creature who had been with Sabron, and seen him fall, she said earnestly:

"Now speak without reserve. Tell me everything."

The face of the man was transformed. He became human, devoted, ardent.

"Excellency," he said swiftly, in his halting French. "I loved Monsieur le Capitaine. He was so kind, and such a brave soldier. I want to go to find Monsieur le Capitaine, but I am ill, and too weak to walk. I believe I know where he is hid, I want to go."

The girl breathed:

"Oh, can it be possible that what you say is true, Hammet Abou? Would you really go, if you could?"

The man made, with a graceful gesture of his hand, a map in the air.

"It was like this," he said: "I think he fell into the bed of an old river. I think he drew himself up the bank. I followed the track of his blood. I was too weak to go any farther, excellency."

"And how could you go now?" she asked.

"By caravan, like a merchant, secretly. I would find him."

Julia Redmond put out a slim hand, white as a gardenia. The native lifted it, and touched his forehead with it.

"Hammet Abou," she said, "go for to-night and come to-morrow. We will see you."

And, without waiting to speak again to Monsieur De Tremont, the native slid away out of the garden like a shadow, as though his limbs were not weak with disease and his breast shattered by shot.

When Monsieur De Tremont walked once around the gardeens, keeping his eyes, nevertheless, on the group, he came back toward Julia Redmond, but not quickly enough, for she ran up the stairs and into the house with Sabron's packet in her hand.

CHAPTER XVIII.

There was music at the Villa Des Bougainvillæas. Miss Redmond sang not "Good night, God keep you safe," but other things. Ever since her visit with Hammet Abou, she had been, if not gay, in good spirits, more like her old self, and the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs

began to think that the image of Charles Sabron had not been cut too deeply upon her mind. The marquise, from the lounge in the shadow of the room, enjoyed the picture—Sabron would not have added it to his collection—of her niece at the piano and the Duc De Tremont by her side. The Comtesse De La Maine sat in a little shadow of her own, musing, and enjoying the picture of the Duc De Tremont and Miss Redmond very indifferently. She did not sing; she had no parlor accomplishments. She was poor, a widow, and had a child. She was not a brilliant match.

From where he stood, Tremont could see the Comtesse De La Maine in her little shadow, the Oriental decorations a background to her slight, Parisian figure, and a little out of the shadow the bright aigret in her hair danced, shaking its sparkles of fire. She looked infinitely sad and infinitely appealing. One bare arm was along the back of her lounge. She leaned her head upon her hand.

After a few moments, the Duc De Tremont quietly left the piano and Miss Redmond, and went and sat down beside the Comtesse De La Maine, who, in order to make a place for him, moved out of the shadow.

Julia, one after another, played songs she loved, keeping her fingers resolutely from the notes that wanted to run into a single song, the song that linked her to the man whose life had become a mystery. She glanced at the Duc De Tremont and the Comtesse De La Maine. She glanced at her aunt, patting Mimi, who, freshly washed, adorned by pale-blue ribbon, looked disdainful and princely; and, with passion and feeling, she began to sing the song which seemed to reach beyond the tawdry room of the villa in Algiers, and to go into the desert, trying in sweet intensity to speak and to comfort, and as she sat so singing to one man, Sabron would have adored adding that picture to his collection!

The servant came up to the marquise, and gave her a message. The lady rose, beckoned Tremont to follow her, and went out on the veranda, followed by

Mimi. Julia stopped playing, and went over to the Comtesse De La Maine.

"Where have my aunt and Monsieur De Tremont gone, madame?"

"To see some one who has come to suggest a camel excursion, I believe."

"He chooses a curious hour."

"Everything is curious in the East, mademoiselle," returned the comtesse. "I feel as though my own life were turned upside down."

"We are not far enough in the East," smiled Julia Redmond.

She regarded the comtesse with her frank, girlish scrutiny. There were in it a fine truthfulness and utter disregard of all the barriers that long epochs of etiquette put between souls.

Julia Redmond knew nothing of French society, and of the deference due to the arts of the old world. She knew, perhaps, very little of anything. She was young and unschooled. She knew, as some women know, how to feel, and how to be, and how to love. She was as honest as her ancestors, among whose traditions is the story that one of them could never tell a lie.

Julia Redmond sat beside the Comtesse De La Maine, whose elegance she admired enormously, and, taking one of the lady's hands, with frank liking she asked in her rich young voice:

"Why do you tolerate me, madame?"

"*Ma chère enfant!*" exclaimed the Comtesse De La Maine. "Why, you are adorable!"

"It is terribly good of you to say so," murmured Julia Redmond. "It shows how generous you are."

"But you attribute qualities to me I do not deserve, mademoiselle."

"You deserve them, and much more, madame. I loved you the first day I saw you; no one could help loving you."

Julia Redmond was irresistible. The Comtesse De La Maine had remarked her caprices, her moods, her sadness. She had seen that the good spirits were false, and, as keen women do, she had attributed it to a love affair with the Duc De Tremont. The girl's frankness was contagious. The Comtesse De La Maine murmured:

"I think the same of you, *ma chérie!* *Vous êtes charmante.*"

Julia Redmond shook her head. She did not want compliments. The eyes of the two women met, and read each other.

"Couldn't you be frank with me, madame? It is so easy to be frank."

It was, indeed, impossible for Julia Redmond to be anything else. The comtesse, who was only a trifle older than the young girl, felt like her mother just then. She laughed.

"But be frank—about what?"

"You see," said Julia Redmond swiftly, "I care absolutely nothing for the Duc De Tremont, nothing."

"You don't love him?" returned Madame De La Maine, with deep feeling. "Is it possible?"

The girl smiled.

"Yes, quite possible. I think he is a perfect dear. He is a splendid friend, and I am devoted to him, but I don't love him at all, not at all."

"Ah!" breathed Madame De La Maine, and she looked at the American girl guardedly.

For a moment it was like a passage of arms between a frank young Indian chief and a Jesuit. Julia shook her feathers and her beads.

"And I don't care in the *least* about being a duchess! My father made his money in oil. I am not an aristocrat, like my aunt," she said.

"Then," said the Comtesse De La Maine, forgetting that she was a Jesuit, "you will marry Robert De Tremont, simply to please your aunt?"

"But nothing on earth would induce me to marry him!" cried Julia Redmond.

"That's what I'm telling you, madame. I don't love him!"

The Comtesse De La Maine looked at her companion, and bit her lip. She blushed more warmly than is permitted in the Faubourg St. Germain, but she was young, and the Western influence is pernicious.

"I saw that you loved him at once," said Julia Redmond frankly. "That's why I speak as I do."

The Comtesse De La Maine drew herself up.

"Oh," said Julia Redmond, "don't deny it. I shan't like you half so well if you do. There is no shame in being in love, is there, especially when the man you love loves you?"

The Comtesse De La Maine broke down, or, rather, she rose high. She rose above all the smallness of convention and the rules of her French formal education.

"You are wonderful," she said, laughing softly, her eyes full of tears. "Will you tell me what makes you think that he is fond of me?"

"But you know it so well," said Julia. "Hasn't he cared for a long time?"

Madame De La Maine wondered just how much Julia had heard, and, as there was no way of finding out, she said graciously:

"He has seemed to love me very dearly for many years; but I am poor; I have a child. He is ambitious, and he is the Duc De Tremont."

"Nonsense!" said Julia. "He loves you. That's all that counts. You will be awfully happy. You will marry the Duc De Tremont, won't you? There's a dear."

"Happy," murmured the other woman, "happy, my dear friend. I never dreamed of such a thing!"

"Dream of it now," said Julia Redmond swiftly, "for it will come true."

CHAPTER XIX.

The Marquise Des Mille Fleurs, under the stars, interviewed the native soldier, the beggar, the man in rags, at the foot of the veranda. There was a moon, as well as stars, and the man was distinctly visible in all his squalor.

"What on earth is he talking about, Robert?"

"About Sabron, *marraine*," said her godson laconically.

The Marquise Des Mille Fleurs raised her lorgnon, and said:

"Speak, man! What do you know about Monsieur Sabron? See, he is covered with dirt; has leprosy, probably."

But she did not withdraw. She was a great lady, and stood her ground. She

did not know what the word squeamish meant.

Listening to the man's jargon and putting many things together, Tremont at last turned to the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs, who was sternly fixing the beggar with her haughty condescension:

"*Marraine*, he says that Sabron is alive, in the hands of natives in a certain district where there is no travel, in the heart of the seditious tribes. He says that he has friends in a caravan of merchants who once a year pass the spot where this native village is."

"The man's a lunatic," said the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs calmly. "Get Abimelec, and put him out of the garden, Robert. You must not let Julia hear of this."

"*Marraine*," said Tremont quietly, "Mademoiselle Redmond has already seen this man. He has come to see her to-night."

"How perfectly horrible!" said the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs. Then she asked, rather weakly, of Tremont: "Don't you think so?"

"Well, I think," said Tremont, "that the only interesting thing is the truth there may be in what this man says. If Sabron is a captive, and he knows anything about it, we must use his information for all it is worth."

"Of course," said the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs. "Of course. The war department must be informed at once. Why hasn't he gone there?"

"He has explained," said Tremont, "that the only way Sabron can be saved is that he shall be found by outsiders. One hint to his captors would end his life."

"Oh," said the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs, "I don't know what to do, Bob! What part can we take in this?"

Tremont pulled his mustache. Mimi had circled round the beggar, snuffing at his slippers and his robe. The man made no objection to the little creature, to the fluffy ball surrounded by a huge bow, and Mimi sat peacefully down in the moonlight at the beggar's feet.

"Mimi seems to like him," said the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs helplessly, "she is very particular."

"She finds that he has a serious and a convincing manner," said Tremont.

Now the man, who had been a silent listener to the conversation, said in fairly comprehensible English to the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs:

"If the beautiful grandmother could have seen the Capitaine Sabron on the night before the battle——"

"Grandmother, indeed!" exclaimed the marquise indignantly. "Come, Mimi! Robert, finish with this creature, and get what satisfaction you can from him. I believe him to be an impostor; at any rate, he does not expect me to mount a camel or to lead a caravan to the rescue."

Tremont put Mimi in her arms. The marquise folded her lorgnon and sailed majestically away, like a highly decorated pinnace with silk sails, and Tremont, in the moonlight, continued to talk with the sincere and convincing Hammet Abou.

CHAPTER XX.

Now the young girl had his letters and her own to read. They were sweet and sad companions, and she laid them side by side. She did not weep, because she was not of the weeping type; she had hope.

Her spirits remained singularly even. Madame De La Maine had given her a great deal to live upon.

"Julia, what have you done to Robert?"

"Nothing, *ma tante*."

"He has quite changed. This excursion to Africa has entirely altered him. He is naturally so gay," said the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs. "Have you refused him, Julia?"

"*Ma tante*, he has not asked me to be the Duchesse De Tremont."

Her aunt's voice was earnest.

"Julia, do you wish to spoil your life and your chances for happiness? Do you wish to mourn for a dead soldier who has never been more than an acquaintance? I won't even say a friend."

What she said sounded logical.

"*Ma tante*, I do not think of Monsieur Sabron as dead, you know."

"Well, in the event that he may be, my dear Julia."

"Sometimes," said the girl, drawing near to her aunt and taking the older lady's hand quietly and looking in her eyes, "sometimes, *ma tante*, you are cruel."

The marquise kissed her, and sighed.

"Robert's mother will be so unhappy!"

"But she has never seen me, *ma tante*."

"She trusts my taste, Julia."

"There should be more than 'taste' in a matter of husband and wife, *ma tante*."

After a moment, in which the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs gazed at the bougainvillea and wondered how any one could admire its crude and vulgar color, Miss Redmond asked:

"Did you ever think that the Duc De Tremont was in love?"

Turning shortly about to her niece, her aunt stared at her.

"In love, my dear!"

"With Madame De La Maine."

The arrival of Madame De La Maine had been a bitter blow to the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs. The young woman was, however, much loved in Paris, and quite in the eye of the world. There was no possible reason why the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs should avoid her.

"You have been hearing gossip, Julia."

"I have been watching a lovely woman," said the girl simply, "and a man. That's all. You wouldn't want me to marry a man who loves another woman, *ma tante*, when the woman loves him, and when I love another man!"

She laughed, and kissed her aunt's cheek.

"Let us think of the soldier," she murmured. "Let us think just of him, *ma tante*, will you not?"

The Marquise Des Mille Fleurs struck her colors.

In the hallway of the villa, in a snowy gibbeh—and his clean-washed appearance was much in his favor—Hammet Abou waited to talk with the "grandmother" and the excellency.

He pressed both his hands to his forehead and his breast as the ladies entered the vestibule. There was a stagnant odor of myrrh and sandalwood in the air. The marble vestibule was cool and dark, the walls hung with highly colored stuffs, the windows drawn to keep out the heat.

The Duc De Tremont and Madame De La Maine came out of the salon together. Tremont nodded to the Arab.

"I hope you are a little less"—and he touched his forehead, smiling—"to-day, my friend."

"I am as God made me, monsieur."

"What have you got to-day?" asked Julia Redmond anxiously, fixing her eager eyes upon Hammet.

It seemed terrible to her that this man should stand there with a vital secret, and that they should not all be at his feet. He glanced boldly around at them.

"There are no soldiers here."

"No, no; you may speak freely."

The man went forward to Tremont, and put a paper in his hands, unfolding it like a chart.

"This is what monsieur asked me for—a plan of the battlefield. This is the battlefield, and this is the desert."

Tremont took the chart. On the page was simply a round circle, drawn in red ink, with a few Arabian characters, and nothing else. Hammet Abou traced the circle with his fingers tipped with henna.

"That was the battle, monsieur."

"But this is no chart, Hammet Abou."

The other continued, unmoved:

"And all the rest is a desert, like this."

Tremont, over the man's snowy turban, glanced at the others, and shrugged. Every one but Julia Redmond thought he was insane. She came up to him where he stood, close to Tremont. She said very slowly in French, compelling the man's dark eyes to meet hers:

"You don't wish to tell us, Hammet Abou, anything more. Am I not right? You don't wish us to know the truth."

Now it was the North American Indian pitted against the Oriental. The Arab, with deference, touched his forehead before her.

"If I made a true plan," he said cool-

ly, "your excellency could give it, tomorrow, to the government."

"Just what should be done, Julia," said the marquise, in English. "This man should be arrested at once."

"*Ma tante*," pleaded Julia Redmond.

She felt as though a slender thread were between her fingers, a thread which led her to the door of a labyrinth and which a rude touch might cause her to lose forever.

"If you had money, would you start out to find Monsieur Sabron at once?"

"It would cost a great deal, excellency."

"You shall have all the money you need. Do you think you would be able to find your way?"

"Yes, excellency."

The Duc De Tremont watched the American girl. She was bartering with an Arab for the salvation of a poor officer. What an enthusiast! He had no idea she had ever seen Sabron more than once or twice in her life. He came forward.

"Let me talk to this man," he said, with authority, and Julia Redmond did not dispute him.

In a tone different to the light and mocking one that he had hitherto used to the Arab, Tremont began to ask a dozen questions severely, and in his answers to the young Frenchman, Hammet About began to make a favorable impression on every one save on the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs, who did not understand him. There was a huge bamboo chair on a dais under a Chinese pagoda, and the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs took the chair and sat upright, as on a throne. Mimi, who had just been fed, came in tinkling her little bells and fawned at the sandals on Hammet About's bare feet.

After talking with the native, Tremont said to his friends:

"This man says that if he joins a Jewish caravan which leaves here tomorrow at sundown, he will be taken with these men and leave the city without suspicion, but he must share the expenses of the whole caravan. The expedition will not be without danger; it must be entered into with great subtlety. He is

either," said De Tremont, "an impostor or a remarkable man."

"He is an impostor, of course," murmured the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs. "Come here, Mimi."

Tremont went on:

"Further he will not disclose to us. He has evidently some carefully laid plan for rescuing Sabron."

There was a pause. Hammet About, his hands folded peacefully across his breast, waited. Julia Redmond waited. The Comtesse De La Maine, in her pretty voice, asked quickly:

"But, *mes amis*, there is a man's life at stake! Why do we stand here talking in the antechamber? Evidently the war office has done all it can for the Capitaine Sabron; that is undisputed. But it has not found him. Whether this fellow is an *exalté* or not, he has a wonderful hypothesis."

A brilliant look of gratitude crossed Julia Redmond's face. She glanced at the Comtesse De La Maine.

"Ah, she's got the heart!" she said to herself. "I knew it."

She crossed the hall to the Comtesse De La Maine, and slipped her arm in hers.

"Has Monsieur Sabron no near family?"

"No," said the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs from her throne. "He is one of those unfamilied beings who, when they are once taken into other hearts, are all the dearer because of their orphaned state."

Her tone was not unkind. It was affectionate.

"Now, my good man," she said to Hammet About, in a language totally incomprehensible to him, "money is no object in this question. But what will you do with Monsieur Sabron if you find him? He may be an invalid, and the ransom will be fabulous."

The Comtesse De La Maine felt the girl's arm in hers tremble. Hammet About answered none of these questions, for he did not understand them. He said quietly to Tremont:

"The caravan starts tomorrow at sundown, and there is much to do."

Tremont stood pulling his mustache.

He looked boyish and charming, withal serious beyond his usual habit. His eyes wandered over to the corner where the two women stood together.

"I intend to go with you, Hammet Abou," said he slowly, "if it can be arranged. Otherwise this expedition does not interest me."

Two women said:

"Of course; at once."

Robert De Tremont heard the note of anxiety in the younger voice alone. He glanced at the Comtesse De La Maine.

"You are quite right, madame," he said. "A man's life is at stake, and we stand quibbling here. I know something of what the desert is, and what the natives are. Sabron would be the first to go if it were a question of a brother officer."

The Marquise Des Mille Fleurs got down from her throne, trembling. Her eyes were fixed upon her niece.

"Julia," she began, and stopped.

Madame De La Maine said nothing.

"Robert, you are my godson, and I forbid it. Your mother——"

"Is one of the bravest women I ever knew," said her godson. "My father was a soldier."

Julia withdrew her arm from the Comtesse De La Maine, as though to leave her free.

"Then you two girls," said the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs, thoroughly American for a moment, "must forbid him to go."

She fixed her eyes sternly upon her niece, with a glance of entreaty and reproach. Miss Redmond said, in a firm voice:

"In Monsieur De Tremont's case I should do exactly what he proposes."

"But he is risking his life," said the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs. "He is not even an intimate friend of Monsieur Sabron!"

Tremont said, smiling:

"You tell us that he has no brother, *marraine*. Eh bien, I will pass as his brother."

A thrill touched Julia Redmond's heart. She almost loved him. If, as her aunt had said, Sabron had been out of the question——

"Madame De La Maine," said the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs, her hands shaking, "I appeal to you to divert this headstrong young man from his purpose."

The Comtesse De La Maine was the palest of the three women. She had been quietly looking at Tremont, and now a smile crossed her lips that had tears back of it—one of those beautiful smiles that means so much on a woman's face. She was the only one of the three who had not yet spoken. Tremont was waiting for her. Hammet Abou, with whom he had been in earnest conversation, was answering his further questions. The Marquise Des Mille Fleurs shrugged, threw up her hands as though she gave up all questions of romance, and rescue, and disappointed love, and foolish girls, and walked out, thoroughly wretched, Mimi tinkling at her heels. The Comtesse De La Maine said to Julia:

"*Ma chérie*, what were the words of the English song you sang last night—the song you told me was a sort of prayer? Tell me the words slowly, will you?"

They walked out of the vestibule together, leaving Hammet Abou and Tremont alone.

CHAPTER XXI.

Pichioni, who might have been considered as one of the infinitesimal atoms in the economy of the universe, ran over the sands away from his master. He was an infinitesimal dot on the desert's face. He was only a small Irish terrier in the heart of the Sahara. His little wiry body and his color seemed to blend with the dust. His eyes were dimmed by hunger, and thirst, and exhaustion, but there was the blood of a fighter in him, and he was a thoroughbred. Nevertheless he was running away. It looked very much like it. There was no one to comment on his treachery; had there been, Pichioni would not have run far.

It was not an ordinary sight to see on the Sahara—a small Irish terrier going as fast as he could.

Pichioni ran with his nose to the ground. There were several trails for a dog to follow on that apparently untrodden page of desert history. Which one should he choose? Without a scent a dog does nothing. His nostrils are his instinct. His devotion, his faithfulness, his intelligence, his heart—all come through his nose. A man's heart, they say, is in his stomach—or in his pocket. A dog's is in his nostrils. If Pichioni had chosen the wrong direction this story would never have been written. Michette did not give birth to the seventh puppy in the stables of the garrison for nothing. Nor had Sabron saved him on the night of the memorable dinner for nothing.

With his nose flat to the sands, Pichioni smelled to east and to west, to north and south, took a scent to the east, decided upon it—for what reason will never be told—and followed it. Fatigue and hunger were forgotten as hour after hour Pichioni ran across the Sahara. Mercifully the sun had been clouded by the precursor of a windstorm. The air was almost cool. Mercifully the wind did not arise until the little terrier had pursued his course to the end.

There are occasions when an animal's intelligence surpasses the human. When, toward evening of the twelve hours that it had taken him to reach a certain point, he came to a settlement of mud huts on the borders of an oasis, he was pretty nearly at the end of his strength. The oasis was the only sign of life in five hundred miles. There was very little left in his small body. He lay down, panting, but his bright spirit was unwilling just then to leave his form, and hovered near him.

Pichioni panted, and dragged himself to a pool of water around which the green palms grew, and he drank and drank. Then the little desert wayfarer hid himself in the bushes, and slept till morning. All night he was racked with convulsive twitches, but he slept, and in his dreams he killed a young chicken and ate it. In the morning he took a bath in the pool, and the sun rose while he swam in the water.

If Sabron or Miss Redmond could

have seen him! He would have seemed the epitome of heartless egoism. He *was* the epitome of wisdom.

Pichioni shook out his short, hairy body, and came out of the oasis pool into the sunlight, and trotted into the Arabian village.

Fatou Anni parched corn in a brazier before her house. Her house was a mud hut with yellow walls. It had no roof, and was open to the sky. Fatou Anni was ninety years old, straight as a lance—straight as one of the lances the men of the village carried when they went to dispute with white people. These lances with which the young men had disputed had won them the last battle. They had been victorious on the field.

Fatou Anni was the grandmother of many men. She had been the mother of many men. Now she parched corn tranquilly, prayerfully.

Allah, that the corn should not burn! Allah, that it should be sweet! Allah, that her men should be always successful!

She was the fetish of the settlement. In a single blue garment, her black, scrawny breast uncovered, the thin veil that the Fellaheen wear pushed back from her face, her fine eyes were revealed, and she might have been a priestess as she bent over her corn:

"Allah, Allah Akbar!"

Rather than anything should have happened to Fatou Anni, the settlement would have roasted its enemies alive, torn them in shreds. Some of them said that she was two hundred years old. There was a charmed ring drawn around her house. People supposed that if any creature crossed it uninvited it would fall dead.

The sun had been risen for an hour, and the air was still cool. Overhead the sky, unstained by a single cloud, was blue as a turquoise floor, and against it, black and portentous, flew the vultures. Here and there the sun-touched pools gave life and reason to the oasis.

Fatou Anni parched her corn. Her barbaric chant was interrupted by a sharp bark and a low, pleading whine.

She had never heard sounds just like

that. The dogs of the village were great, wolflike creatures. Pichioni's bark was angelic compared to theirs. He crossed the charmed circle drawn around her house, and did not fall dead, and stood before her, whining. Fatou Anni left her corn, stood upright, and looked at Pichioni. To her the Irish terrier was an apparition. The fact that he had not fallen dead proved that he was beloved of Allah. He was, perhaps, a jinni, an afreet.

Pichioni fawned at her feet. She murmured a line of the Koran. It did not seem to affect his demonstrative affection. The woman bent down to him, after making a pass against the Evil Eye, and touched him, and Pichioni licked her hand.

Fatou Anni screamed, dropped him, went into the house, and made her ablutions. When she came out Pichioni sat patiently before the parched corn, and he again came crawling to her.

The Arabian woman lived in the last hut of the village. She could satisfy her curiosity without shocking her neighbors. She bent down to scrutinize Pichioni's collar. There was a sacred medal on it, with sacred inscriptions which she could not read. But as soon as she had freed him this time, Pichioni tore himself away from her, flew out of the sacred ring, and disappeared. Then he ran back, barking appealingly; he took the hem of her dress in his mouth, and pulled her. He repeatedly did this, and the superstitious Arabian believed herself to be divinely called. She cautiously left the doorstep, her veil falling before her face, came out of the sacred ring, followed to the edge of the berry field. From there Pichioni sped over the desert; then he stopped and looked back at her.

Fatou Anni did not follow, and he returned to renew his entreaties. When, however, she tried to touch him he escaped, keeping at a safe distance. The village began to stir. Blue and yellow garments fluttered in the streets.

"Allah Akbar," Fatou Anni murmured; "these are days of victory, of recompense."

She gathered her robe around her,

and stately and impressively started toward the huts of her grandsons. When she returned, eight young warriors fully armed accompanied her. Pichioni sat beside the parched corn watching the brazier and her meal. Fatou Anni pointed to the desert.

She said to the young men: "Go with this jinni. There is something he wishes to show us. Allah is great. Go!"

When the Capitaine Sabron opened his eyes in consciousness, they encountered a square of blazing blue heaven. He weakly put up his hand to shade his sight, and a cotton awning, supported by four bamboo poles, was swiftly raised over his head. He saw objects, and took cognizance of them. On the floor in the low doorway of a mud hut sat three little naked children, covered with flies and dirt. He was the guest of Fatou Anni. These were three of her hundred great-great-grandchildren. The babies were playing with a little dog. Sabron knew the dog, but could not articulate his name.

By his side sat the woman to whom he owed his life. Her veil fell over her face. She was braiding straw. He looked at her intelligently. She brought him a drink of cool water in an earthen vessel, where the drops oozed forth from the porous sides. The hut was reeking with odors which met his nostrils at every breath he drew. He asked in Arabic:

"Where am I?"

"In the hut of victory," said Fatou Anni.

Pichioni overheard the voice, and came to Sabron's side. His master murmured:

"Where are we, my friend?"

The dog leaped on his bed, and licked his face. Fatou Anni, with a whisk of straw, swept the flies from him. A great weakness spread its wings above him, and he fell asleep.

Days are all alike to those who lie in mortal illness. The hours are intensely colorless, and they slip and slip and slip into painful wakefulness, into fever, into drowsing finally, and then into weakness.

The Capitaine Sabron, although he had no family to speak of, did possess, unknown to the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs, an old aunt in the provinces, and a handful of heartless cousins who were indifferent to him. Nevertheless he clung to life, and in the hut of Fatou Anni fought for existence. Every time that he was conscious he struggled anew to hold onto the thread of life.

Fatou Anni cherished him. He was a soldier who had fallen in the battle against her sons and grandsons. He was a man and a strong one, and she despised women. He was her prey, and he was her reward, and she cared for him; as she did so she became maternal.

His eyes which, when he was conscious, thanked her; his thin hands that moved on the rough blue robe thrown over him, the devotion of the dog, found a responsive chord in the great-grandmother's heart. Once he smiled at one of the naked, big-bellied, great-grandchildren. Beni Hassan, three years old, came up to Sabron with his finger in his mouth, and chattered like a bird. This proved to Fatou Anni that Sabron had not the Evil Eye. No one but the children was admitted to the hut, but the sun, and the flies, and the cries of the village came in without permission, and now and then, when the winds arose, he could hear the stirring of the palm trees.

Sabron was reduced to skin and bone. His nourishment was insufficient, and the absence of all decent care was slowly taking him to death. It will never be known why he did not die.

Pichioni took to making long excursions. He would be absent for days, and in his clouded mind Sabron thought the dog was reconnoitering for him over the vast pink sea without there—which, if one could sail across as in a ship, one would sail to France, through the walls of mellow old Tarascon, to the château of good King René; one would sail as the moon sails, and through an open window one might hear the sound of a woman's voice, singing. The song, ever illusive and irritating in its persistency, tantalized his sick ears.

Sabron did not know that he would have found the château shut had he

sailed there in the moon. It was as well that he did not know, for his thought would not have known where to follow, and there was repose in thinking of the Château Des Mille Fleurs.

It grew terribly hot. Fatou Anni, by his side, fanned him with a fan she had woven. The great-great-grandchildren on the floor in the mud fought together. They quarreled over bits of colored glass. Sabron's breath came panting. Without he heard the cries of the warriors, the lance bearers—he heard the cries of Fatou Anni's sons, who were going out to battle. The French soldiers were in a distant part of the Sahara, and Fatou Anni's grandchildren were going out to pillage and destroy. The old woman by his side cried out and beat her breast. Now and then she looked at him curiously, as if she saw death on his pale face.

Now that all her sons and grandsons had gone, he was the only man left in the village, as even boys of sixteen had joined the raid. She wiped his forehead, and gave him a potion that had healed her husband after his body had been pierced with arrows. It was all she could do for a captive.

Toward sundown, for the first time, Sabron felt a little better, and after twenty-four hours' absence Pichioni whined at the hut door, but would not come in. Fatou Anni called on Allah, left her patient, and went out to see what was the matter with the dog. At the door, in the shade of a palm, stood two Bedouins.

It was rare for the caravan to pass by Beni Medinet. The old woman's superstition foresaw danger in this visit. Her veil before her face, her gnarled old fingers held the fan with which she had been fanning Sabron. She went to the strangers. Down by the well a group of girls in garments of blue and yellow, with earthen bottles on their heads, stood staring at Beni Medinet's unusual visitors.

"Peace be with you, Fatou Anni," said the older of the Bedouins.

"Are you a cousin or a brother that you know my name?" asked the ancient woman.

"Every one knows the name of the oldest woman in the Sahara," said Hammet Abou, "and the victorious are always brothers."

"What do you want with me?" she asked, thinking of the helplessness of the village.

Hammet Abou pointed to the hut.

"You have a white captive in there. Is he alive?"

"What is that to you, son of a dog?"

"The mother of many sons is wise," said Hammet Abou portentously, "but she does not know that this man carries the Evil Eye. His dog carries the Evil Eye for his enemies. Your people have gone to battle. Unless this man is cast out from your village your young men, your grandsons, and your sons will be destroyed."

The old woman regarded him calmly.

"I do not fear it," she said tranquilly.

"We have had corn and oil in plenty. He is sacred."

For the first time she looked at his companion, tall, and slender, and evidently younger.

"You favor the coward Franks," she said, in a high voice. "You have come to fall upon us in our desolation."

She was about to raise the peculiar wail which would have summoned to her all the women of the village. The dogs of the town had already begun to show their noses, and the villagers were drawing near the people under the palms. Now the young man began to speak swiftly in a language which she did not understand, addressing his comrade. The language was so curious that the woman, with the cry arrested on her lips, stared at him. Pointing to his companion, Hammet Abou said:

"Fatou Anni, this great lord kisses your hand. He says that he wishes he could speak your beautiful language. He does not come from the enemy; he does not come from the French. He comes from two women of his people by whom the captive is beloved. He says that you are the mother of sons and grandsons, and that you will deliver this man up into our hands in peace."

The narrow, fetid streets were begin-

ning to fill with the figures of women, their beautifully colored robes fluttering in the light, and there were curious, eager children who came running, naked save for the bangles upon their arms and ankles.

Pointing to them Hammet Abou said to the old sage:

"See, you are only women here, Fatou Anni. Your men are twenty miles farther south. We have a caravan of fifty men, all armed, Fatou Anni. They camp just there at the edge of oasis. They are waiting. We come in peace, old woman; we come to take away the Evil Eye from your door; but if you anger us and rave against us why, then——"

She began to beat her palms together, murmuring:

"Allah, Allah!"

"Hush!" said the Bedouin fiercely.

"Take us to the captive, Fatou Anni."

Fatou Anni did not stir. She pulled aside the veil from her withered face, so that her great eyes looked out at the two men. She saw her predicament, but she was a subtle Oriental. Victory had been in her camp and in her village; her sons and grandsons had never been vanquished. Perhaps the dying man in the hut would bring the Evil Eye! He was dying, anyway; he would not live twenty-four hours. She knew this, for her ninety years of life had seen many eyes close on the oasis under the hard, blue skies.

To the taller of the two Bedouins she said in Arabic:

"Fatou Anni is nearly one hundred years old. She has borne twenty children, she has had fifty grandchildren; she has seen many wives, many brides, and many mothers. She does not believe the sick man has the Evil Eye. She is not afraid of your fifty armed men. Fatou Anni is not afraid. Allah is great. She will not give up the Frenchman because of fear, nor will she give him up to any man. She gives him to the women of his people."

With dignity and majesty, and with great beauty of carriage, the old woman turned and walked toward her hut, and the Bedouins followed her.

CHAPTER XXII.

When Sabron next opened his eyes, he fancied that he was at home in his old room in Rouen, in the house where he was born; in the little room in which, as a child, dressed in his dimity nightgown, he had sat up in bed by candle-light to learn his letters from the cook book.

The room was snowy white. Outside the window he heard a bird sing, and near by he heard a dog's smothered bark. Then he knew that he was not at home or a child, for with the languor and weakness came his memory. A quiet nurse in a hospital dress was sitting by his bed, and Pichioni rose from the foot of the bed and looked at him adoringly.

He was in a hospital in Algiers.

"Pichioni," he murmured, not knowing the name of his other companion, "where are we, old fellow?"

The nurse replied, in an agreeable Anglo-Saxon French:

"You are in a French hospital in Algiers, sir, and doing well."

Tremont came up to him.

"I remember you," Sabron said, "You have been near me a dozen times lately."

"You must not talk, *mon vieux*."

"But I feel as though I must talk a great deal. Didn't you come for me into the desert?"

Tremont, healthy, vigorous, tanned, gay, and cheerful, seemed good-looking to poor Sabron, who looked up at him with touching gratitude.

"I think I remember everything. I think I shall never forget it," he said, and lifted his hand feebly. Robert Tremont took it. "Haven't we traveled far together, Tremont?"

"Yes," nodded the other, affected; "but you must be quiet now, you must sleep. We will talk about it over our cigars and liqueurs soon."

Sabron smiled faintly. His clear mind was regaining its balance, and thoughts began to sweep over it cruelly fast. He looked at his rescuer, and the other's radiance meant simply that he was engaged to Miss Redmond. Of course, that was natural. Sabron tried

to accept it, and to be glad for the happiness of the man who had rescued him. But as he thought this he wondered why he had been rescued, and shut his eyes so that Tremont might not see his weakness. He said hesitatingly:

"I am haunted by a melody, a tune. Could you help me? It won't come."

"It's not the Marseillaise?" asked the other, sitting down by his side, and pulling Pichioni's ears.

"Oh, no!"

"There's going to be some singing in the ward shortly. A Red Cross nurse comes to sing to the patients. That might suit you."

Sabron gave up in despair. Haunting, tantalizing, illusive, the notes began and stopped, began and stopped. He wanted to ask his friend a thousand questions. How he had come to him? Why he had come to him? How he knew?

He gave it all up and dozed, and while he slept the sweet sleep of those who are to recover, he heard the sound of a woman's voice in the distance, singing, one after another, familiar melodies, and finally he heard the Kyrie Eleison, and to its music Sabron fell deeply asleep.

The next day he received a visitor. It was not an easy matter to introduce visitors to his bedside, for Pichioni objected. Pichioni received the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs with great displeasure.

The Marquise Des Mille Fleurs was wondering what her niece saw in the pale man so near still to the borders of the other world.

"You will be leaving the army, of course," she murmured, looking at him interestedly.

"Madame!" said the Capitaine Sabron, with his blood—all that was in him—rising to his cheeks.

"I mean that France has done nothing for you. France did not rescue, and you may feel like seeking a more—another career."

Sabron could not reply. Her ribbons, and flowers, and jewels shook in his eyes like a kaleidoscope. His flush had made him more natural. In his invalid state, with his hair brushed back from

his fine brow, there was something spiritual and beautiful about him. The Marquise Des Mille Fleurs looked on a man who had been far, and determined of his own accord to come back. She said, more gently, putting her hand affectionately over his:

"Get strong, monsieur. Get well. Eat all the good things we are making for you. I dare say that the army cannot spare you. It needs brave hearts."

Sabron was so agitated after her departure that the nurse said he must receive no more visits for several days, and he meditated, and longed, and thought, and wondered, and nearly cursed the life that had brought him back to a world which must be lonely for him henceforth.

When he sat up in bed he was a shadow. He had a book to read, and read a few lines of it, but he put it down as the letters blurred. He was sitting so, dreaming, and wondering how true or how false was it that he had seen Julia Redmond come several times to his bedside during the early days of his illness here in the hospital. Then across his troubled mind suddenly came the words that he had heard her sing, and he tried to recall them. The Red Cross nurse who so charitably sang in the hospital came to the wards, and began her mission. One after another she sang familiar songs.

"How the poor devils must love it!" Sabron thought, and he blessed her for her charity.

How familiar was her voice! But that was only because he was so ill. But he began to wonder and to doubt, and across the distance came the notes of the tune, the melody of the song that had haunted him for many months:

God keep you safe, my love,

All through the night;
Rest close in His encircling arms
Until the light.

My heart is with you as I kneel to pray.
Good night! God keep you in His care
always.

Thick shadows creep like silent ghosts

About my head;
I lose myself in tender dreams,
While overhead

The moon comes stealing through the window bars,
A silver sickle gleaming 'mid the stars.

For I, though I am far away,
Feel safe and strong;
To trust you thus, dear love—and yet—
The night is long—
I say with sobbing breath the old fond prayer:
Good night, sweet dreams! God keep you everywhere!

When she had finished singing there were tears on the soldier's cheeks, and he was not ashamed. Pichioni, who remembered the tune as well, crept up to him, and laid his head on his master's hand. Sabron had just time to wipe away the tears when the Duc De Tremont came in.

"Old fellow, do you feel up to seeing Miss Redmond for a few moments?"

When she came in he did not know whether he most clearly saw her simple summer dress with the single jewel at her throat, her large hat that framed her face, or the gentle, lovely face, all sweetness and sympathy. He believed her to be the future Duchess De Tremont.

"Monsieur Sabron, we are all so glad you are getting well."

"Thank you, mademoiselle."

He seemed to look at her from a great distance, from the distance to the end of which he had so wearily been traveling. She was lovelier than he had dreamed, more rarely sweet and adorable.

"Did you recognize the little song, monsieur?"

"It was good of you to sing it."

"This is not the first time I have seen you, Monsieur Sabron. I came when you were too ill to know of it."

"Then I did not dream," said the officer simply.

He was proud as he was poor. He could only suppose her engaged to the Duc De Tremont. It explained her presence here. In his wildest dreams he could not suppose that she had followed him to Africa. Julia, on her part; having done an extraordinary and wonderful thing, like every brave woman, was

seized with terror and a sudden cowardice. Sabron, after all, was a stranger. How could she know his feelings for her? She spent a miserable day. He was out of all danger. In a fortnight he might leave the hospital. She did not feel that she could see him again as things were. The Comtesse De La Maine had returned to Paris as soon as Tremont came in from the desert.

"*Ma tante*," said Julia Redmond to the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs, "can we go back to France immediately?"

"My dear Julia!" exclaimed her aunt, in surprise and delight. "Robert will be enchanted, but he would not be able to leave his friend so soon."

"He need not," said the girl, "nor need you leave unless you wish."

The Marquise Des Mille Fleurs entertained a thousand thoughts. She had not studied young girls' minds for a long time. She had heard the modern American girl was very extreme, and she held her in rather light esteem. Julia Redmond she had considered to be out of the general rule. Was it possible, she wondered, that Julia, in comparing Tremont with the invalid, found Robert more attractive?

"Julia," she said severely, as though her niece were a child, pointing to a chair, "sit down!"

Slightly smiling, the young girl obeyed her aunt.

"My dear, I have followed your caprices from France to Africa. Only by pleading heart failure and mortal illness could I dissuade you from going into the desert with the caravan. Now, without any apparent reason, you wish to return to France."

"The reason for coming here has been accomplished, *ma tante*. Monsieur Sabron has been found."

"And now that you have found him," said the marquise reproachfully, "and you discover that he is not all your romantic fancy imagined, you are going to run away from him; in short, you mean to throw him over."

"Throw him over, *ma tante*!" murmured the girl. "I have never had the chance. Between Monsieur Sabron and myself there is only friendship."

"Fiddlesticks!" said the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs impatiently. "I have no understanding of the modern young girl. She makes her own marriages and her subsequent divorces. I am your aunt, my dear, your mother's sister, and a woman of at least twenty-five years more experience than you have."

Julia was not following her aunt's train of thought, but her own. She felt the hint of authority and bondage in her aunt's tone, and repeated:

"I wish to leave Algiers to-morrow."

"You shall do so," said her aunt. "I am rejoiced to get out of the Orient. It is late to order my dresses for Trouville, but I can manage. Before we go, however, my dear, I want you to make me a promise."

"A promise, *ma tante*?" The girl's tone implied that she did not think she would.

"You have played the part of fate in the life of this young man, who, I find, is a charming and brave man. Now you must stand by your guns, my dear Julia."

"Why, how do you mean, *ma tante*?"

"You will go to Paris, and the Capitaine Sabron will get well rapidly. He will follow you, and if it were not for Tremont, myself, your Red Cross Society, and the presence here of Madame De La Maine, you would have been very much compromised. But never mind," said the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs magnificently; "my name is sufficient protection for my niece. I am thinking solely of the poor young man."

"Of Monsieur Sabron, *ma tante*?"

"Of course," said the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs tartly. "Did you think I meant Robert? You have as well as arranged his life for him, my dear."

"*Ma tante*!" pleaded the girl.

The marquise was merciless.

"I want you to promise me, Julia, before you sail for home, that if Monsieur Sabron follows us, and makes you to understand that he loves you, as he will, that you will accept him."

Julia Redmond looked at the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs in astonishment. She half laughed and she half cried.

"But, *ma tante*, you want me to promise?"

"I do," said her aunt firmly, regarding her niece through her lorgnon. "In the first place, the affair is entirely unconventional, and has been since we left France. It is I who should speak to the Capitaine Sabron. You are so extremely rich that it will be a difficult matter for a poor and honorable young man — Indeed, my dear, I may as well tell you that I *shall* do so when we reach home."

"Oh!" said the girl, turning pale, and stepping forward toward her aunt. "If you consider such a thing I shall leave for America at once."

The Marquise Des Mille Fleurs gave a petulant sigh.

"How impossible you are, Julia. Understand me, my dear, I do not want a woman of my family to be a coquette. I do not want it said that you are an American flirt; bad taste, and entirely misunderstood in the Faubourg St. Germain."

The girl, bewildered by her aunt's attitude, and extremely troubled by the threat of the marriage convention, said: "Don't you understand? In this case it is peculiarly delicate. He might ask me from a sense of honor."

"Not in any sense," said the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs. "It has not occurred to the poor young officer to suppose for a moment that a young woman with millions, as you are so fortunate as to be, would derange herself like this to follow him. If I thought so I would not have brought you, Julia. What I have done I have done solely for your peace of mind, my child. This young man loves you. He believes that you love him, no doubt. You have given him sufficient reason, Heaven knows. Now," said her aunt emphatically, "I do not intend that you should break his heart."

It was more than likely that the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs was looking back twenty-five years to a time when, as a rich American, she had put aside her love for a penniless soldier with an insignificant title. She remembered how she had followed his campaign. She

folded her lorgnon, and looked at her niece. Julia Redmond saw a cloud pass over her aunt's tranquil face. She put her arms around her, and kissed her tenderly.

"You really think, then, *ma tante*, that he will come to Paris?"

"Without a doubt, my dear."

"You think he cares, *ma tante*?"

Her aunt kissed her, and laughed.

"I think you will be happy to a bourgeois extent. He is a fine man."

"But do I need to *promise* you?" asked the girl, "Don't you *know*?"

"I shall be perfectly ashamed of you," said the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs, shaking herself into convention, "if you are anything but a woman of heart and decision in this matter."

Evidently she waited, and Julia Redmond, slightly bowing her lovely head in deference to the older lady, who had not married her first love, said obediently:

"I promise to do as you wish, *ma tante*."

CHAPTER XXIII.

Sabron could not understand why the Duc De Tremont lingered after the departure of the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs, the Comtesse De La Maine, and Miss Redmond. The presence of the young man would have been agreeable had it not been for his jealousy and his unhappiness.

They played piquet together. Sabron, in his right mind, thinner and paler, nevertheless very much of a man, now smoked his cigarette, and ate his three meals a day. He took a walk, and was quite fit to leave the Orient. Tremont said:

"I think, Sabron, that we can sail this week."

Sabron looked at him questioningly.

"You are going, then, too?"

"Of course," said the young nobleman heartily. "We are going together. You know I am going to take you back in my yacht."

Sabron hesitated, and then said:

"No, *mon vieux*, if you will excuse me I think I will remain faithful to the

old line of travel. I have an idea that I am not in yachting trim."

Tremont was not too dull to have noticed his friend's change of attitude toward him. He smoked for a few moments, and then said:

"When we get back to Paris I want to have the pleasure of introducing you to my fiancée."

Sabron dropped his cards.

"Introducing me!" he repeated. Then, putting out his hand, said cordially: "I knew you were to be felicitated, old fellow."

Tremont shook his hand warmly.

"Yes, and the lady is very anxious to know you. It is Madame De La Maine."

A very warm color flushed the cheeks of the invalid. He remembered all he had heard, and all he had known. He congratulated his friend with sincere warmth, and after a few moments said:

"If you really want me to go back with you on the yacht, old chap—"

"I really do," said Tremont serenely. "You see, when we came down on the boat we scarcely hoped to be so fortunate as to bring back the distinguished captain."

Sabron smiled.

"But you have not told me yet," he said, "why you came down."

"No," said Tremont, "that is true. Well, it will make a story for the sea."

In the month of May, when the chest-nuts bloom in green dells, where the delicate young foliage holds the light as in golden cups, a young man walked through one of the small alleys at the fashionable noon hour, a little reddish dog trotting at his heels. The young man walked with a perceptible limp.

He was thin as men are thin who have lived hard, and who have overcome tremendous obstacles. He was tanned as men are brown who have come from Eastern and extreme Southern countries.

The little dog had a perceptible limp, occasioned by a bicycle running over him when he was a puppy.

The two companions seemed immensely to enjoy the spring day. Sabron every now and then stood for a

few moments looking into the green of the woods, looking at the gay passers-by, pedestrians and equestrians, enjoying to the full the repose of civilization, the beauty of his own land.

Pichioni looked with indifference upon the many dogs. He did not stir from his master's side. When Sabron was quiet, the little animal as well stood at attention; he was a soldier's dog. He could have told dog stories to these insignificant worldly dogs—could have told of really thrilling adventures. His brown eyes were pathetic with their appeal of affection as they looked up at his beloved master. He had a fund of experience such as the poodles and the terriers led by their owners could not understand. Therefore Pichioni was indifferent to them. Not one of these petted, ridiculous house dogs could have found the regiment, could have run for miles in the dark across an African desert, and have fetched relief to his master. Pichioni was proud of it. He was very well satisfied with his career. He was still young; other deeds of valor perhaps lay before him—who can tell? At any rate, he had been shown about at the ministry of war, and had been very much admired, and he was a proud animal.

When Sabron spoke to him he leaped upon him, and wagged his tail. After a few moments, as the two stood near the exit of an alley leading to one of the grand avenues, Pichioni slowly went in front of his master, and toward two ladies sitting on a bench in the gentle warmth of the May sunlight. Pichioni, moved from his usual indifference, gave a short bark, walked up to the ladies, and began to snuff about their feet. The younger lady exclaimed, and then Sabron, lifting his hat, came forward, the crimson color beating in his dark, tanned cheeks.

The Marquise Des Mille Fleurs held out both her hands to the officer.

"It's nearly noon," she said, "and you don't forget that you have promised to lunch with us, do you, Monsieur le Capitaine?"

Sabron, bending over her hand, assured her that he had not forgotten.

Then his eyes traveled to her companion. Miss Redmond wore a very simple dress, as was her fashion, but the young officer from Africa, who had not seen her near by until now, who had only caught a glimpse of her across the opera house, thought that he had never seen such a beautiful dress in all his life. It was made of a soft gray cloth, and fitted her closely, and in the button-hole of her mannish little lapel she wore a few Parisian violets. He recognized them. They had come from a bunch which he had sent her the night before. He kissed her hand, and they stood talking together, the three of them for a few moments, Pichioni stationing himself as a sentinel by Miss Redmond's side.

The Marquise Des Mille Fleurs rose. The young girl rose as well, and they walked on together.

"Don't go with your usual rush, Julia," said the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs. "Remember that Monsieur De Sabron is not strong as Hercules yet. I will follow you with Pichioni."

But she spoke without knowledge of the dog. Now, feeling that some unwonted happiness had suddenly burst upon the horizon that he knew, Pichioni seemed suddenly seized with a rollicking spirit such as had been his characteristic some years ago. He tore like mad down the path in front of Sabron and Miss Redmond. He whirled around like a dervish, he dashed across the road in front of automobiles, dashed back again, springing upon his master, and whining at the girl's feet.

"See," Sabron said, "how happy he is!"

"I should think he would be happy. He must have a knowledge of what an important animal he is. Just think! If he were a man they would give him a decoration."

And the two walked tranquilly side by side.

Pichioni ran to the side of the road, disappeared into the little forests all shot through with light. He came back, bringing the remains of an old rubber ball lost there by some other dog. He laid it triumphantly in front of Miss Redmond.

"See," said Sabron, "he brings you his trophies."

Le Comte De Sabron finished his dressing.

Brunet surveyed his master from the tip of his shining boots to his sleek, fair head. His expressive eyes said:

"Monsieur le Capitaine is looking well to-night."

Brunet had never given his master a direct compliment. His eyes only had the habit of expressing admiration, and the manner in which he performed his duties, his devotion, were his forms of compliment. But Sabron's long illness and absence, the fact that he had been snatched from death and given back to the army again, leveled between servant and master the impassable wall of etiquette.

"There will be a grand dinner to-night, will there not, Monsieur le Capitaine? Doubtless Monsieur le Colonel and all the gentlemen will be there."

Brunet made a comprehensive gesture, as though he compromised the entire *état major*.

Sabron looked indeed well. He was thin, deeply bronzed by the exposure on the yacht, for he and Tremont, before returning to France, had made a long cruise. Sabron wore the look of a man who has come back from a far country, and is content.

"And never shall I forget to the end of my days how Monsieur le Capitaine looked when I met the yacht at Algiers."

Brunet spoke reverently, as though he were chronicling sacred souvenirs.

"I said to myself, you are about to welcome back a hero, Brunet! Monsieur le Capitaine will be as weak as a child. But I was determined that Monsieur le Capitaine should not read my feelings, however great my emotion."

Sabron smiled. At no time in his simple life did Brunet ever conceal the most trifling emotion; his simple face revealed all his simple thoughts. Sabron said heartily:

"Your control was very fine, indeed."

"Instead of seeing a sick Monsieur

le Capitaine, a splendid-looking figure, with red cheeks and bright eyes, came off the boat to the shore. I said to myself: Brunet, he has the air of one who comes back from a victory. No one would have ever believed that Monsieur le Capitaine had been rescued from captivity."

Brunet's curiosity was very strong, and as far as his master was concerned he had been obliged to crush it down. To himself he was saying: "Monsieur le Capitaine is on the eve of some great event; when will he announce it to me? I am sure that my master is going to be married."

Pichioni, from a chair near by, assisted at his master's toilet, one moment holding the razor strop between his teeth, then taking the clothes brush in his little grip. He was saying to himself: "I hope in the name of rats and cats my master is not going out without me!"

Brunet was engaged to be married to the kitchen maid of the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs. *Ordonnances* and scullions are not able to arrange their matrimonial affairs quite as easily as are the upper classes.

"Monsieur le Capitaine," said the servant, his simple face raised to his master's, "I am going to be married."

Sabron wheeled around.

"*Mon brave Brunet! When?*"

Brunet grinned sheepishly.

"In five years, Monsieur le Capitaine," at which the superior officer laughed heartily.

"Is she an infant? Are you educating her?"

"When one is the eldest son of a widow," said Brunet, with a sigh, "and the eldest of ten children——"

The clock struck the quarter. Sabron knew the story of the widow and the ten children by heart.

"Is the taxi at the door?"

"Yes, Monsieur le Capitaine."

Pichioni gave a sharp bark.

"You are not invited," said his master cruelly, and went gayly out, his sword hitting against the stairs.

La Marquise Des Mille Fleurs gave

a brilliant little dinner to the colonel of Sabron's squadron. There were present a general or two, several men of distinction, and among the guests was the Duc De Tremont and Madame De La Maine. Sabron, when he found himself at table, looked at everything as though in a dream. Julia Redmond sat opposite him. He had sent her flowers, and she wore them in her bodice. Madame De La Maine bent upon the young officer benignant eyes, the Duc De Tremont glanced at him affectionately, but Sabron was only conscious that Julia's eyes did not meet his at all.

They talked of Sabron's captivity, of the engagement in Africa, of what the army was doing, would not do, or might do; and the fact that the Duc De Tremont was to receive the decoration of honor in July. Tremont toasted Sabron, and the young officer rose to respond with flushing face. He looked affectionately at his friend, who had brought him from death into life. The moment was intense, and the Marquise Des Mille Fleurs lifted her glass.

"Now, gentlemen, you must drink to the health of Pichioni."

There was a murmur of laughter. Madame De La Maine turned to Sabron:

"I have had a collar made for Pichioni; it is of African leather, set with real turquoise."

Sabron bowed.

"Pichioni will be perfectly enchanted, madame. He will wear it at your wedding."

Later, when the others had left them to themselves in the music room, Sabron sat in a big chair by the open window, and Julia Redmond played to him. The day was warm. There was a smell of spring flowers in the air, and the vases were filled with giroflés and sweet peas. But Sabron only smelled the violets in Julia's girdle. Her hands gently wandered over the keys, gently finding the tune which Sabron longed to hear.

She played the air through, and it seemed as though she was about to sing the first verse. She could not do so, nor could she speak.

Sabron rose and came over to where she sat.

There was a low chair near the piano, and he took it, leaning forward, his hands about his knees. It had been the lifelong dream of this simple-hearted officer that one day he would speak out his soul to the woman he loved. The time had come. She sat before him in her unpretentious dress. He was not worldly enough to know it cost a great price, nor to appreciate that she wore no jewels—nothing but the flowers he had sent. Her dark hair was clustered about her ears, and her beautiful eyes lost their fire in tenderness.

"When a man has been very close to death, mademoiselle, he looks about for the reason of his resurrection; when he returns to the world he looks to see what there is in this life to make it worth living. I am young, in the beginning of my career. I may have before me a long life, in which with health and friends I may find much happiness. These things certainly have their worth to a normal man—but I cannot make them real before my eyes just yet. As I look upon the world to which I have returned, I see nothing but a woman and her love. If I cannot win her for my wife, if I cannot have her love—"

He made an impressive gesture, which more than words implied how completely he laid down everything else to her love and his.

He said, not without dignity:

"I am quite poor; I have only my soldier's pay. In Normandy I own a little property. It is upon a hill, and looks over the sea, with apple orchards and wheat fields; there is a house. These are my landed estates. My manhood and my love are my fortune. If you cannot return my love, I shall not thank Tremont for bringing me back from Africa."

The American girl listened to him with profound emotion. She discovered every second how well she understood him, and he had much to say, because it was the first time he had ever spoken to her about his love. She put out both her hands, and, looking at him fully, said simply:

"Why, it seems to me you must know how I feel. How can you help knowing how I feel?"

After a little he told her of Normandy, and how he had spent his childhood and boyhood in the château overlooking the wide sea, told her how he watched the ships, and used to dream of the countries beyond the horizon, and how the apple blossoms filled the orchards in the spring. He told her how he longed to go back, and that his wandering life had made it impossible for years.

Julia whispered:

"We will go there in the spring, my friend."

He was charming as he sat there holding her hands closely, his fine eyes bent upon her. Sabron told her things that had been deep in his heart and mind, waiting for her so many months. Finally everything merged into his present life, and the beauty of what he said dazed her like an enchanted sea. He was a soldier, a man of action, yet a dreamer.

The fact that his hopes were about to be realized made him tremble, and as he talked everything took light from his victory. Even his house in Normandy began to see a fitting setting for the American.

"It is only a Louis XIII. château; it stands very high, surrounded by orchards, which in the spring are white as snow."

"We will go there in the spring," she whispered.

Sabron stopped speaking, his reverie was done, and he was silent as surged over him the intensity of his love for her. He lifted her delicate hands to his lips.

"It is April now," he said, and his voice shook. "It is spring now, my love."

At Julia's side was a slight touch. She cried: "Pichioni!" He put his paws on her knees, and looked up into her face.

"Brunet has brought him here," said

Sabron, "and that means the good chap is attending to his own love-making."

Julia laid her hand on Pichioni's head.

"He will love the Norman beaches, Charles."

"He will love the forests," said Sabron; "there are forests there."

Pichioni barked softly.

On the little dog's head the two hands met and clasped.

"Pichioni is the only one in the world who is not *de trop*," said Julia gently.

Sabron, lifting her hand again to his lips, kissed it long, looking in her eyes.

Pichioni sat before them, waiting. He wagged his tail, and waited. No one noticed him. He gave a short bark, which apparently disturbed no one.

Pichioni had become *de trop*.

He was discreet. With sympathetic eyes he gazed on his beloved master and new mistress, then turned and quietly trotted across the room to the hearth-

rug, sitting there meditatively for a few minutes blinking at the empty grate, where on the warm spring day there was no fire.

Pichioni lay down before the fireless hearth, his head forward on his paws, his beautiful eyes still discreetly turned away from the lovers. He drew a long, contented breath, as dogs do before settling into repose. His thrilling adventures had come to an end. Before fires on the friendly hearth in the Louis XIII. château, where hunting dogs were carved in the stone above the chimney, Pichioni might continue to dream in the days to come. He would hunt rabbits in the still forests above the wheat fields, and live again in the firelight his adventures in the desert, the long runs across the sands on his journey back to France.

Now he closed his eyes. As a faithful friend he had been the sole companion of a lonely man; now he had become part of a family.



DAYS

THE longest day is not that day
 The sun is latest setting;
 When wide-eyed June
 Awakes too soon
 The dawn with joyful shouts.
 The longest day is that sad day,
 When, comrade, love forgetting,
 We drift apart,
 Somehow, in heart,
 And face the world—at outs!

The shortest day is not that day
 Which soonest wearies living;
 When Nature sighs
 At friendless skies,
 And Winter's lips are dumb.
 The shortest day is that sweet day
 When, dear, all ills forgiving,
 We feel in soul
 That home's the goal,
 And beckoning arms say: Come!

RALPH M. THOMPSON.

PUSS IN A CORNER

By

MAY FUTRELLE



HAD to give it up; I didn't know the answer. If I had been ugly; if I had had only one eye, or just a part of a nose, I could have come nearer a conclusion. But I had to face the awful, dreadful fact, and admit it—I'd never had a proposal in my life!

Men made love to me; all sorts and kinds of men; all sorts and kinds of love; and I have learned what every girl has to learn—to distinguish genuine affection from witty conversation. I wondered sometimes how I knew, for I'd never had an introduction to love and a chance for comparison. I tried, too, to figure out just what it was that always had happened to prevent the making of me into Mrs. Somebody-or-other, and I couldn't. Upon my soul, it began to look like I was to go on being Kit Callaway to the end of my days.

Being poor had nothing to do with it; no one knew we were poor—we never had been. Mumsey was supposed to have the income on a huge life insurance left by my father. She hadn't, for the life insurance went to pay my father's debts and let his memory rest in peace. But no one knew that—no one except mumsey and me.

I'm sure no one had the slightest suspicion that my wonderful imported gowns were cast-offs of Cousin Mary's, because Cousin Mary lived two thousand miles away, and imported gowns have a mussy look, anyhow. No one had a suspicion about anything except

that rushing me was a part of a man's social job, my favor his passport to social recognition. No one would have believed I'd never had a proposal.

I had finally made up my mind to one thing—somebody was going to marry me! Getting myself settled was a duty I owed mumsey, for she was growing old, and the old can't go on dragging about from pillar to post; they need a home, and a hearthstone, and the privilege of dying in peace.

It was a double duty I owed Fred and Caroline. Although they never had done anything for me except be kind and take themselves off to Palm Beach every year, just at the time when their beautiful flat could give me the necessary setting for my social fling—and a roof over my head—I'd about decided that kindness is the greatest thing in the world. I knew nothing about love, and in my set love seemed a badly abused thing, buffeted, and continually put upon.

So! Now, where was the man?

I thought about it as I dressed for the dinner dance at the Montgomery Wards, whose grandfather on her side peddled matches when my great-grandfather was the blue-blooded governor of our State. And I made a moue at the mirror, intending to convey to the girl I saw there that this was a ridiculous old world to bring about such changes. The girl in the mirror "moued" back saucily, a girl with a lot of yellow hair, and a tip-tilted nose that could make impertinence pass for wit, and rather dark-

ish blue eyes that seemed only smiling, merry eyes unless one looked too close and detected the too-wise look in them. They matched the mouth—"kissable," men called it; but the smile there could so easily have been a sneer, except that the girl knew her business in the social world. Everybody liked her, and she never had had a proposal in her life. *Ca fait mal!*

I quite decided that the man I married must be rich—superlatively so. I'd scrambled too hard all my life to settle down forever with any little ten thousand a year or so. I'm sure I didn't care if he were old, or if he were callow, or ugly, or anything, so long as he had enough money. I admitted to myself I could even stand for a napkin in his collar. Money will excuse anything. Money! The very word is magical. Money! Good Lord! The opportunities I have missed for lack of it. Money! If I had had to choose from all this world has to offer, I should have chosen money.

I mentally checked off the solid-income men as I fixed my hair. I knew I should have to put aside my maidenly ways, and begin to campaign; that was how Natalie finally landed Bob Chandler. I had always hoped I shouldn't have to do that—campaign; that a proposal would come to me on the wings of love, in the way that every girl dreams of, lives for! But it hadn't; so I concluded that I might as well gather up my skirts and start for the mountain.

I leaned back in the limousine Mrs. Ward had sent for me, and smiled at Billy Ward over the roses he had brought—just the faintest pink they were, and looked to me—well, different. Suddenly I remember that I had not figured Billy in my solid-income list.

I looked him over, my nose deep in the roses, quite as if it were the first time I had ever seen him, although I'd known Billy all my life. It occurred to me to wonder if he had ever taken the least personal interest in me. I never had in him—before. I had never had a you-and-me conversation with him,

and no man will ever take an interest in a girl until she talks to him about herself.

I began to think that Billy Ward might be worth while. I liked him. It occurred to me to wonder if that liking was for Billy himself, or was it for his solid income, and the luxury of a limousine, and the sheer beauty and delight of roses?

Billy lounged gracefully in an opposite corner of the car, smoking a cigarette—he had asked permission to smoke, which is more than most men do nowadays—and as I looked him over, this time critically, instead of saying to myself that he was a handsome chap, a gentleman to all appearances, enormously rich, and one of the most promising young lawyers in town, ergo a suitable prey for me, I only thought: "His great-grandfather peddled matches!"

"How long have we known each other, Billy?" I demanded suddenly.

He shot a surprised glance at me.

"Why—er—always," he answered.

"And right now you can't tell the color of my hair, or my eyes; whether I'm short or tall." I smiled at him.

"Your hair is"—he glanced at my hair—"pure gold," he said. "Your eyes are—"

"Exactly! My eyes—are." I laughed when he didn't go on. "I was sure you didn't know."

"What's the idea?" he asked.

He forsook the lounging attitude, and his face took on the interested expression every man's does when a girl begins that you-and-me conversation.

"Billy, were you ever in love?" I wanted to know.

"Yes," he answered promptly.

"Why, for Heaven's sake! With whom?" I stammered.

"Everybody—everything," he smiled. "And I am still, always expect to be—with girls, flowers—er—horses—"

"That will do," I interrupted.

He laughed a good, boyish, ringing laugh, which gave me a chance to frame my next you-and-me question:

"How old am I, Billy?"

"Eighteen," he answered promptly.

"Oh, wake up! I'm twenty-four—with the experience of eighty," I added, after a moment.

"You look eighteen," he protested.

"I've been out five seasons."

"Charming eighteen," he smiled.

"How old are you, Billy?"

"Twenty-eight."

"With the experience of six."

"What's the idea?" he questioned. "I think you are trying to insult me." He has a bully laugh.

"Oh, the idea is—er—the difference between men and women," I told him.

"I don't get you," he smiled.

"Women grow old so much faster than men," I elucidated. "Now, here am I, growing old, while you——"

"Old! Yes, you are!"

"Then sooner or later a woman must give up her liberty, while a man——"

"What are you talking about?" he demanded.

"Marriage. I've been thinking it over, and I've decided——"

"Are you going to give up your liberty?"

"I think so," I answered.

The look in his eyes puzzled me; there came a pause before he spoke again:

"Who is he, Kit?"

"I don't know," I replied.

"Oh!"

"You see——" I began.

"It's not love, then?" he demanded.

"No, Billy; it's money," I admitted. "Love has passed me by, and I'm growing old——"

"Piffle!"

"So I must be up and doing. It's a girl's duty to society to get married, and the mountain certainly is not moving toward me."

"How many men have you refused?"

"What would you think if I answered 'Not one'?"

"I'd think you were a plain little liar," he answered frankly.

I had a wild impulse to confide in him, to tell him the truth about myself—how I never had had a proposal, how I must marry somebody, and for money, because we were so desperately poor, how it had to be soon, because I couldn't

go on longer without money. But the impulse passed as swiftly as it had come. I laughed, and let it go at that.

"Don't marry for money, Kit," he advised. "Wait for love. Love is everything in the world."

"Money is everything in the world, Billy."

"Love!"

There's no use arguing with a man, but I went on:

"That's because you have money."

He regarded me curiously, while I smiled back at him.

"Love is more than money," he argued.

"Really? I don't suppose you would marry me, so that I could find out about the money for myself?" I asked. "Now, would you?"

"Not without love," he answered. "I wouldn't marry any woman unless she loved me." His eyes questioned mine for a moment, and I know *now* what they were asking. "Wait for love, Kit."

That's what I wanted to do. To wait for love, and have it come to me in the way every girl dreams of, *lives for!* Suddenly I leaned back my head, and laughed, a laugh that was a little too loud, and had no mirth in it. What in the world did Billy Ward know of advising me concerning love and money? He who never had needed anything in the world that money could buy? He who could afford to wait for love?

Well, let him wait. I couldn't. I needed money; needed it badly; no one but myself knew just how badly. The only way I knew to get it was to marry it, whether there was, or ever could be, any question of love. Unless I should turn thief, and pilfer from the wealth that surrounded me. Thief! The word is ugly. Thief—or marriage without love. I wonder which is worse?

"You're laughing at me," Billy said slowly. "I thought we were talking seriously."

"Seriously!" I echoed. "Do I ever talk seriously? And surely you can't expect a girl to ask a man seriously to marry her—now, can you?" I laughed.

"I didn't take it just that way, Kit."

The limousine came to a stop under the porte-cochère.

"A man always purposely misunderstands, doesn't he?" I asked.

"I don't know. I can't make out what——"

He assisted me from the car, and stood looking at me in a puzzled fashion.

"Well, would you mind trying to inside, Billy? The weather is zero, and my slippers thin——"

"Wait for love, Kit," he said once again.

I turned away impatiently. *Sa sacré!* What an idiot of a man!

I felt, I *knew*, that my face was dead white, and as I ran along the hallway I wondered that my knees supported me. At the foot of the stairs I wondered if I could climb them. As I gained the top I saw a bulky, black-coated figure lurch through the crowd in the archway, and I sped on. I knew my way perfectly in the house, but in my terror, instead of opening the door to Mrs. Ward's boudoir, I found myself in the little anteroom off the smoking room, which Billy claims as his own sanctum. He was there at that moment, and the room beyond was deserted. I have always thanked God for that.

"Why—what's the matter?" he demanded.

"Help me! Protect me!"

He came to his feet.

"Kit!"

I tumbled into his arms to keep from crumpling up on the floor, and he held me close to steady me. I tried to control my terror, tried to speak, tried to say something casual—that was it, *that was it*, to say something *casual*!

"What's the matter?"

I tried to tell him something, *anything*. But the words would not form, my brain wouldn't work.

"Tell me what has frightened you."

I could not tell him. I couldn't—I couldn't!

"Tell me, Kit."

He compelled me to meet his eyes, and—now I know why witnesses must speak when he looks at them like that.

"He tried to kiss me," I said.

"Kiss you?" he questioned.

"Yes. A—a horrid kiss. Oh!" My terror came rushing back at thought of it; I fell to trembling. I wanted to laugh; I very much wanted to cry. "For Heaven's sake, don't ask me anything else," I begged. "I can't answer—I won't answer."

"Who tried to kiss you?"

"He's drunk; he doesn't know what he's doing," I told him desperately. "Oh, please——"

I didn't want to scream; it's such a silly thing to do. I put my two hands tightly over my mouth. I would not scream!

"*Who* tried to kiss you, Kit?"

The tone was sweet and gentle, and I could stand it no longer. I dropped my head against his shoulder, sobbing.

"Jim Marston," I whispered.

His arms stiffened a bit, and it came to me instantly that I should not have told him. Men have such extreme ideas about protecting women.

"Marston!"

"Oh, it was my fault, Billy—it was—it was! I—I was flirting with him. I didn't realize how—how very much too much he had had. He—he didn't know what he was doing. Billy!"

"Steady, Kit," he said; and I fell to sobbing again. He stroked my hair. I believe he kissed me, but it was on the forehead. "Come; pull yourself together, Kit. I'll send for my mother and Sue——"

"No, no! Oh, please don't tell them!" I implored. "You must not tell any one, not even your mother. Please—I'm calm now. It's all over."

There was a rush of footsteps along the corridor, stumbling, unsteady steps, and an instant later Jim Marston's bulky, black-coated figure burst through the doorway of the room.

"S' that woman——" he began thickly, and repeated it, louder, with an oath, as he lurched toward me.

Billy knocked him down.

"Miss Callaway, if—you—please!" he said distinctly.

I had a wild impulse to laugh, it was

so like a silly scene in a play—Jim the villain, Billy young hero in a limelight attitude, and I the persecuted heroine. But I only put my two hands tightly over my mouth again.

Jim tried to get up, fumbling meanwhile at the pocket of his waistcoat.

"S' that woman——" he began again.

"You'll call Miss Callaway by name," Billy told him, "or I'll kick your head off."

"S' took Geraldine's bracelet," Jim got out thickly.

"What's he talking about?" Billy demanded of me.

"Why—I don't know," I replied. "I—I think he's accusing me of—of taking his sister's bracelet."

Billy strode to the bell, and nearly tore it from the wall. A half dozen servants came quickly.

"Take Mr. Marston to his car!" he commanded.

Jim struggled to his feet, and was borne away by two of the servants, kicking, protesting thickly.

"Find my mother and sister," Billy directed another. "Send the limousine in front! Bring Miss Callaway's wraps!"

They scurried away to do his bidding.

"I'll take you home," he said finally to me.

"But I—I can't go home," I protested; "not now, after—after this. It would cause comment; it would look as if I were running away. Besides, Geraldine's bracelet——"

"Kit, what's this about Geraldine's bracelet?"

"Why, I—I don't know," I stammered, "except that the clasp was loose, and she gave it to Jim to take care of."

Billy, after a moment, rang the bell again.

"You see," I went on, "I can't go home. Your mother would have to know why I am going. Billy, promise me you will not tell her; promise me you will not tell anybody Jim kissed me. I couldn't bear it, I couldn't, I couldn't!"

"Steady, Kit," he said gently. "We won't tell anybody anything, except that Geraldine's bracelet is missing." Then

to the servant who appeared: "Will you ask Miss Marston to come here?" After the man had gone: "We can't have you accused of stealing without proving it false."

I only stared at him, trying to realize that I had been accused of stealing. It was not long before Mrs. Ward came, and while we waited silently I tried to figure just where I stood in this terrible situation. Billy lighted a cigarette, and stood regarding the lighted end intently. I guess he was trying to figure some things, too.

To this day, I don't know how Billy put it to them—his mother, sister, Geraldine—I only know that he stated the case, and seemed to leave me out of it.

"Jim's not hurt?" Geraldine wanted to know.

"No, not hurt," Billy answered her. Geraldine looked from one to the other of us, puzzled a bit; then into her eyes crept a startled look.

"Jim has my bracelet, Billy," she said. "Would you mind getting it from him? The clasp was unsafe, and I was afraid I'd lose it. He put it in a pocket of his waistcoat. Will you get it, please?"

"That's the trouble," Billy told her. "Jim hasn't the bracelet; he has lost it."

"Oh, you're joking?" Geraldine questioned.

"He thinks——" I began.

"What does he think?" Geraldine demanded, beginning to get hysterical.

"He doesn't know what he thinks," Billy said positively. "What kind of a bracelet was it?"

"My diamond one." Geraldine looked from one to the other of us again. "It's worth ten thousand dollars. Billy, you don't mean to tell me——"

"You are sure you gave it to Jim?" Billy asked.

"Of course I'm sure," she snapped. "If this isn't a joke, will you tell me what Jim has done with my bracelet, and," turning to me, "what it is he thinks?"

"He thinks——" I began.

"How long since you gave it to him?" Billy interrupted.

"Oh—two hours ago," Geraldine answered.

"I'll see if Jim has gone yet," Billy told us. "If he has lost the bracelet we will have the house searched. He could have put it in another pocket, and not remember it."

He went out, and left us staring at one another rather awkwardly. Sue had taken possession of a rocker, and sat swaying it back and forth furiously; Geraldine refused to sit down, and stood with tensely locked fingers; and I—I was afraid, terribly afraid. It was so much more awful than I possibly could have imagined—being accused of stealing. Out of the chaos of my thoughts I saw one thing clearly: That Mrs. Ward, Sue, Geraldine should hear suspicion of me from my own lips. I told them what it was Jim thought.

"Oh, stuff!" Geraldine exclaimed. "You, Kit? I guess no one, not even my own brother, can make me swallow that."

"He didn't know what he was doing," I said tearfully.

"I saw you running, Kit," put in Sue.

"I—I was afraid," I whispered, and Mrs. Ward drew me into her arms.

"Well, I shouldn't have run," Sue declared. "I should have given him a piece of my mind."

"Oh, I—I had to get away. He was—was—"

"Go on; don't mind me," Geraldine broke in. "You may say drunk if you like. But it's not the first time you've seen a man drunk, is it?"

"My dear girls," expostulated Mrs. Ward, "don't lose your tempers. You're hysterical, and it's so easy to say things you'll regret all your lives. Can't we talk about the weather until Billy comes back?"

"It's zero," Sue remarked.

Billy returned empty-handed; the bracelet was not in Jim's possession. A search of the house, and questioning the servants, gave no clew. Billy took me home. We left Geraldine sobbing. While I undressed, I tortured myself trying to imagine how I'd look in a cell, and wondered if Billy would send me roses—those pink ones that looked to me—well, different. I cried myself to sleep.

Keeping the thing from mumsey was the hardest thing I had to do. For once the Lord was good to me, and sent mumsey to bed with influenza, so she couldn't get out and hear anything. Wondering whether she was going to get well or die wasn't anything to having her know I had been accused of stealing. How I suffered during the days that followed! Every time the bell rang I imagined an officer had come to arrest me; the jingle of the telephone became a positive terror. Once the ambulance tore through our street; I thought it was the patrol wagon.

I could not bring myself to read the newspapers, but I put them away, in the event I should have to know what had been printed. I stood the suspense of not knowing for two days; then I locked myself in my room, and read the story. The papers merely stated that Miss Marston had lost a bracelet valued at ten thousand dollars at the Montgomery Wards' dinner dance. The house had been searched without result. A large reward was offered for its recovery. In the event of the bracelet having fallen into dishonest hands, the police were watching the pawnshops. That was all.

Geraldine came once to confirm her statement that no one, not even her own brother, could make her swallow any suspicion of me. The way she said it sounded as if she had tried to convince herself, and hadn't. Once Mrs. Ward came to bring mumsey flowers and fruit. She did not mention the incident of the bracelet. And once Natalie Chandler came. Why she should have chosen me to tell her troubles to was more than I could understand. Poor Natalie! And we thought she was making such a brilliant match when she married Bob Chandler! Then, deeply troubled and perplexed, I was left to myself.

Late one afternoon Jim Marston's card was brought to me. I thought at first of declining to see him, but I would have to face the situation sooner or later, so I went in. I was not embarrassed; he was. He sat on the edge of his chair, clearing his throat frequently, and in defense began to talk about the weather. It took him half an hour to

come to the thing which had brought him.

"See here, Kit," he began abruptly; "I've had a detective on this bracelet case, and he has turned a side light on a great many things for me."

"Well?" I questioned, seeing that he expected me to say something.

"I've learned a great many things about you," he went on slowly. "Now, give me the bracelet. I'll pay you the reward, and swear not to let any one know how I got it back."

I wasn't quite sure I had heard aright. I stared at him for a moment. Then I understood. I got to my feet angrily.

"How dare you?" I cried.

"Now, don't lose your head," he advised. "I guess a girl who has been up against it all these years, and has managed to keep going on nothing, *would* get jolly well tired of it. I'm sorry, that's all—I'm sorry. Now, look here; the thousand dollars reward will pay your bridge debts, and give you something to spend. I'll call off the detectives, swallow the yarn, head and ears, about finding the bracelet in another pocket. A nice little apology to the Wards, and the incident is closed."

I tried to retain control of myself. My knees were so wobbly I had to sit down again, but I met his eyes squarely.

"So you still think I took the bracelet from you?" I asked.

"I know you did," he replied positively.

"When?" I demanded.

"Now, see here——"

"And no one but myself had an opportunity to pilfer that bracelet from your pocket?"

Suddenly he leaned forward.

"You've got that bracelet, my dear young lady. Will you, or will you not, give it to me?"

"If I had the bracelet, I would *not*!" I replied. "Do you think I would trust you to keep silent?"

"If you had a father, or a brother or a——"

"If I had a father, or a brother," I interrupted, "you wouldn't be here!" Suddenly it occurred to me that this man had no business talking to me in

such fashion. I got up, and pointed a rather tragic forefinger at the door. "You may go!"

He hesitated a moment; then he arose, picked up his hat, and started in the direction I indicated.

"I came here to make a friendly proposition," he said, turning back.

I merely glared, and indicated the door again.

"The pawnshops are being watched," he informed me. "If you go to another city you will be followed. You haven't a chance to dispose of it. If you change your mind let me know."

The door closed behind him, and he was gone. What was I to do? I couldn't trust Jim Marston and that promise of silence. I couldn't destroy another woman's reputation. I thought of Billy. He could help me—he would!

I locked the door of my bedroom before I drew the bracelet from its hiding place. It was wrapped securely; I dropped it into my bag.

An hour later I sat in Billy's office.

I'd always been afraid of a lawyer's office. To me it had seemed the resort of the guilty, the only last hope of the fugitive. It had meant to me a big, barren place, with grinning law books, where, across a bare black desk, glared the cold, steely eyes of the representative of justice.

Billy's office wasn't that sort at all. My first impression was of its coziness. It was not barren. The desk was neither bare nor black, and across it the representative of justice did not glare at me. Instead, he smiled, and extended a friendly hand; then he wheeled forward the kind of chair which holds out its arms to you. As I sat down, I noticed on the desk a slim crystal vase holding a single pink rose.

He had no suspicion of what I had come to tell him. I might have paused to wonder why I had come, but I was so sure of his friendship. I could not fathom my heart at that moment—I dared not!—but I knew that Billy had grown into my life. He was the one to whom I turned at a crisis in my life. He was the only person in the world to whom I could have related that inter-

view with Jim. I told him as best I could. His long, lean fingers closed spasmodically when I reached the last—the part about the door.

"Kit, answer me one question," he said finally: "Did you take the bracelet?"

I stared at him.

"I don't ask to hurt you," he went on; "but a client must have an understanding with her lawyer."

"No, I didn't take the bracelet."

He did an astonishing thing; he closed his eyes for a moment; then he smiled, and covered my hand—the hand which lay along the edge of the desk—with both his own. I don't think it was quite ethical, but, then, Billy was Billy, and I was Kit, and we had known each other all our lives.

"Can you tell me, or do you know, who was talking to Jim before yourself?"

"Yes, I know. Bob Chandler."

"Chandler!" he repeated; and something in the way he said it put me in a panic.

"Surely you don't suspect Bob! Why, they were only talking casually. You see," I explained desperately, "I deliberately took Jim away." Again came that wild impulse to confide in him. "I had made up my mind to marry a man for his money—any man would do. Jim had money; Jim would do. I knew if I managed him properly he would ask me to marry him. But he had been drinking, and he misunderstood. Billy——"

"There was no confusion on Chandler's part when you joined them?" Billy persisted. "He has been terribly hard up lately."

"Good gracious, no, Billy!" I tried to say it convincingly. "They were just casually talking."

"Kit, is Jim's detective right? Are you and your mother so very poor?"

"Yes," I answered. After a moment I went on: "We haven't a cent in all the world; we haven't a roof over our heads except when Fred and Caroline go to Palm Beach. We have no income, no expectations, nothing. Years ago mummy's jewels went to pay grocery bills;

then the pictures began to go, and the silver. My clothes are cast-offs sent to me by a cousin. The dark ones I fix for mummy, the light ones I keep for myself. Gloves, veils, and such necessities are given to me by whomever I manage cleverly. Sometimes I exchange the gloves for shoes. My pocket money is what I win at auction. When I lose I give I O U's. Sometimes I manage to pay them. Shall I go on?"

"So you're going to marry for money?"

"Wouldn't you?" I demanded.

His hand trembled over mine before he answered:

"Yes."

Suddenly two tears welled in my eyes.

"Kit, will you marry me?" he asked presently.

"For money?"

"Yes."

"No."

"Why not?"

"Why do you want to marry me?"

"I want the right to protect you," he answered. "I want to give you a home and money. Money is everything in the world. I want to keep you from temptation——"

"You believe me guilty!" I cried.

"I believe you innocent. You wouldn't lie to me, Kit."

I thrust my hand into my bag, and drew forth the package it contained. I tore aside the wrappings, and laid before him Geraldine's stolen bracelet. It was a long time before he spoke.

"Do you wish to tell me how you came by it?" he asked finally. "I don't believe you would lie to me, Kit."

I wanted to throw myself at his feet for such faith in me. But I sat quite still, and the two tears ran down my cheeks.

"I can't tell you," I said, at last. "It wouldn't be right. It was given to me to keep until it could be returned with safety, and that's all I must tell you. I can't tell you who took the bracelet from Jim. You'll just have to keep on having faith in me."

When he spoke again he had come near.

"I will help you protect Natalie," was what he said, and tried to remove my hands from my eyes.

"Billy! You—you know!" I cried.

"See here."

He held up to my astonished, tearful gaze a note of appeal which Natalie had inclosed with the bracelet when she brought it to me, and which I had never seen. I had not opened the package.

"You know," I repeated dully. I seized his hand imploringly. "But you will keep her secret, Billy? It's a dreadful thing to need money. She was desperate; Bob had threatened to shoot himself. She acted on an impulse; she regretted it instantly. She could think of no way to return it safely; she was afraid to keep it, for fear her husband would find it. She brought it to me—to me of all people in the world! Billy, you won't let my attempt to help her be in vain?"

"Poor little puss in a corner!" he said softly. "We will help her together, Kit. You are going to marry me."

"No."

"You said any man would do. Those are your words."

"Oh, not you!" I exclaimed.

"Am I so objectionable?" he questioned. "I know my great-grandfather peddled matches——"

"Billy! It's not that."

"But they were good matches, and

he made money. Money is everything in the world."

"Love is everything in the world," I told him. "You said you would not marry a woman unless she loved you—surely you would not marry a woman unless you loved her."

He strode to the desk, and touched the slim crystal vase which held the single pink rose.

"Do you recognize this rose?" he asked. "It's a peculiar color. I send them to you as often as I dare without making myself ridiculous. That rose represents you. I keep it here before me always; it is fresh every day. Sometimes I kiss it." His voice broke. "I love you. I have always loved you, but I never dared hope that you could love me. Kit, darling, my great-grandfather peddled matches——"

I sat for a long time, my fingers pressed tightly against my eyes; then I arose and went to the desk. I took up the little pink rose, and kissed it. I don't think either of us remembered there was such a thing in the world as Geraldine's stolen bracelet.

"I love you," I whispered—to the rose.

"Kit!" Billy cried.

I caught my breath. I—I nodded. His lips met mine, and my arms reached up and encircled his neck.

Money? Fie! Love is everything in the world.



IN THE KING'S ROOM

AUTUMN hath hung her hills with gold,
With purple and deep red;
Her tapestries, rich fold on fold,
On the walls of the world are spread.

I am a page whom God hath sent
Through the Year's halls of gloom,
To stand, dumb with astonishment,
In the great Ruler's room.

CHARLES HANSON TOWNE.



THERE is a stage in the development of nearly every girl at which she slips upstairs to her room soon after lunch, locks the door, unravels and brushes out the plaited pigtail of adolescence, and, with the aid of a photograph in a theatrical magazine supplement, produces a laborious coiffure after Gaby Deslys or Maxine Elliott—thereafter sitting on the corner of the bed in the crossfire of two mirrors in order to get acquainted with the new and interesting personality revealed to her by the experiment.

In consideration for her family, and, perhaps, in apprehension of her younger brothers, she finally calls in her mother to moderate the effect into demure conventionality, and descends to dinner for the first time an adult and responsible citizen.

Having neither mother nor brothers, Gladys Caine hesitated long between the fascinations of the piquant Deslys and the gorgeous Elliott styles. But she had good taste in an unusual degree, and the transition period ultimately expressed by her vivid chestnut tresses was so delicately achieved that her father was halfway through his soup before he noticed it. And even then, as the Irish say, he didn't.

"That's a mighty attractive frock, Chick," he said, craning his neck over the flower bowl. "How much are you going to sting me for that?"

"Why, you big myopic darling," said

Gladys, bubbling over after her period of deliciously apprehensive restraint, "you paid for this frock months ago, at least, I hope you did. Can't you see? It's my hair!"

Then the soup went cold while Joshua Caine arose and held his daughter at arm's length, and closed one eye to get the effect, and kissed her, and called her "Miss Caine" with huge, boyish jocularity.

Later in the evening, though, he became less jocular, and relapsed frequently into deep thought, and played with the little gold locket on his watch chain. When Gladys perched on the arm of his chair for a moment before saying good night he closed the locket with a snap, and sighed.

"Now you have definitely arrived, Miss Caine," he said, "I shall have to parcel out my time a little bit better to entertain you. But it's no sinecure for a man, and I don't feel quite equal to my job, so you'll have to be easy on me at first. You see, Glad, I've got no one to tell me what to do."

Gladys knew whose portrait lived in that little locket, the edges of which were worn so thin that they almost cut one's fingers. She tried vaguely to imagine how it would feel to have a mother with a calm, wise face like that in the miniature.

"It's grand and exciting to be grown up," she sighed at length, with her head on his shoulder. "But a few hairpins more or less don't make any real differ-

ence. I can always be a chicken again when you want me, you handsomest, best daddy in the world."

Joshua Caine shook his head in a way that suggested he was by no means so sure of it.

A walk of several blocks down Fifth Avenue was necessary the following day to persuade Gladys that all the world was not smiling behind her back, and sidelong glances into a score of shop windows barely sufficed to assure her that her appearance had gained by the change. She did not feel really comfortable until a little shriek from a green omnibus halted her, and she found herself hugged on the crowded sidewalk by May Hilyer. It was with a thrill of pure joy that she realized that May had undergone a similar transformation.

"You big, beautiful darling," said May enthusiastically, hugging her again without restraint. "So you've done it, too! I wish I could grow tall like you, and then perhaps mine would feel more natural. And where did you get tailored? Your costume's as smooth and sleek as a prize rabbit."

"Pull yourself together, May," said Gladys. "The policeman at the corner is grinning."

"I could hug him, too," bubbled Miss Hilyer. "I've been so virtuous while mamma was away that I sometimes held my breath till my eyes popped. Never mind your shopping, come and have tea at the Walmont, we're sure to meet a mob. Oh, Glad; isn't Fifth Avenue heavenly in the sunshine?"

It was obviously vain to attempt the repression of Miss Hilyer's spirits even if Glad had desired it. To the American girl of eighteen it is one grand adventure merely to be alive. So it presently followed that they found themselves wedged into a joyous party of girls of their year, all properly graduated, and coiffed, and tailored, and newly loosed upon town to join the pageant of life with high daring in their bright eyes, and faces delicately flushed with the novelty of freedom.

One or two of the girls were attended by young men with manners as incredibly smooth as their clothes, who drew

their chairs a little to the rear and spoke when they were spoken to, and gazed around them in the intervals with the easy, condescending aloofness that is the pose of young masculinity in all the tea rooms of the world. Another girl had a new, flashing betrothal ring, and her hand was forcibly held up by her friends to exhibit the wonder. She was a soft, dependent creature, the sort of ivy-girl who inevitably grows up around the nearest oak, but, in the eyes of Glad and her friends, a heroine of reckless daring.

One of the well-ironed young men, Bobby Vandeleur, was Glad's childhood playmate, and her almost lifelong devotee. He lost no time in changing chairs and endeavoring to monopolize her attention.

"You positively mustn't propose to me now, Bobby," said Glad in an undertone. "I shall feel wretched."

"Well, we'll take it as read," promised Bobby, sighing. "Why do you always head me off, Glad?"

"Oh, it's monotonous," said Glad. "And I think I'd rather marry a man I can't beat at tennis."

"It's excellent to have a pretty girl's power, but it's merciless to use it like some of them do," reproached Bobby.

"I'm quite sure," countered Glad, "that you never thought of that all by yourself."

"I kind of adapted it," Bobby confessed, and subsided.

And just at that moment, when Glad was congratulating herself upon having successfully buried the subject for the time being, and felt free to lend an ear to the gossip around her, there wandered into this setting of snowy, crowded tables and softly shaded lights a certain Adorable Savage. He appeared very lonely, and bored, and indifferent, and his thoughts seemed to have been very far away from the Walmont tea room until he glanced in Glad's direction, for he started perceptibly on seeing her.

No, this is a story without a villain, and he was not even raven-haired. His hair was fair in a nondescript way, and his fingers were brown with the sun,

and not cigarettes. His eyes were the proper steely penetrant blue, but they were kindly and almost gentle in expression. His temples were as delicately flecked with gray as any *matinée* idol's, and his eyelashes were thick, and dark, and curly, and he might have been quite a pretty man if he had not a neck like a sapling, and shoulders like Hercules, and a fist like a stone hammer.

For a brief, thrilling moment Glad thought he was about to stop and speak to her. Then he seemed to think better of it, and steered a devious route between the packed tables to a chair near the palm court.

"Confess, Glad!" commanded May Hilyer. "You're as pink as a geranium."

"I do know him—slightly," said Glad. "He's one of those men who are always traveling to out-of-the-way, barbarous places to shoot lions and tigers."

"What for?" queried the ivy-girl promptly.

"Because he feels so sad and lonely, I think," replied Glad.

"Isn't that mean!" exclaimed the ivy-girl. "As if the unfortunate lions were to blame."

"Oh, he doesn't have it all his own way, you know. He has to brush his hair to one side to hide where one of them clawed him. I saw it once when he came out of the water at Palm Beach. He's a dear, really, but he married the wrong woman, and they quarreled."

"And it ruined his life?" said the ivy-girl, opening her baby eyes wide in sympathy. "No wonder he feels spiteful and wants to shoot things."

"Only a perfectly awful woman would be unkind to a man like that," said Miss Hilyer, with indignation.

"It must be terrible to marry the wrong person," went on the ivy-girl. "I would never have dreamed of accepting Harry if I were not perfectly sure that he is the only man in the world."

"But how can one be sure?" Glad asked.

The ivy-girl folded her hands over her ring, and sighed happily.

"Something tells you," she said.

Miss Hilyer bungled a cream cake in

her effort to transfer it to her plate, and scrutinize the Savage at the same time.

"Why don't you call him over and make him talk?" she said to Glad. "He's such a *real*-looking man, so different from the slips of boys one usually sees here."

One of the smooth young men shifted uncomfortably.

"I can't very well," said Glad, "because you see I don't recall his name."

She did not add that she failed to remember his name for the very good reason that she had never known it.

When at length they passed out into the hall the Savage was still buried in his lounge chair, reading a theater list with an expression of desperate loneliness that had something wistful and pathetic in it. He raised his head just far enough to look at the row of small buttons on Glad's coat—but no higher.

"He's delicious," said the irrepressible Miss Hilyer when the porter started the revolving door to let them out. "Good-by, dear, and be quite sure you have stopped growing. You're just perfect as you are."

It took Glad's ten minutes to shake off Bobby Vandeleur, walk around the block to the side doors of the Walmont, examine the periodicals at the news stand without buying anything, wander along the wrong corridor and back again, and finally come face to face with herself, panting a little with excitement, in a wall mirror that stood near the tea room. A burst of music came to her from the orchestra as a door opened somewhere.

Now, it did not occur to Glad in precisely these terms, but what she saw in the mirror produced a train of subconscious reasoning very like this:

"That's a cutting hat, and your hair is certainly an improvement, and you have rather nice dark eyes, and a rich-looking mouth, and a complexion that, without this wretched habit of blushing, would leave little to be desired. And you are smartly booted, and dressed with elaborate and quite expensive care, and, on the whole, there is no doubt that you do succeed in presenting an engaging exterior. If you are not to be seen and

talked to, what on earth is it all for? This is a free country, and he's a fellow citizen, and not a Turk or a Fiji Islander. Of course, it's unconventional—but even that's better than appearing deliberately rude and ungrateful."

As I said, Glad did not really formulate these thoughts in so many words. What she actually said to herself was "Oh, damn!" And with that she whisked into the tea room, and walked straight across to the Adorable Savage with her most charming smile. The Savage showed by unmistakable signs that Glad's smile was a good thing for a lonely man to see.

"I dare say I shouldn't talk to you," she said, "but you see I am going to."

"And possibly I should not have expected you to do so," he replied. "But somehow I did."

They stood and surveyed each other with lively interest for a moment, and then for some reason that was not quite clear to her Gladys found herself studying the shiny toe that projected from beneath her skirt, and tapped a little nervously on the violet carpet.

"What is it they do to girls at your age?" asked the Savage wonderingly. "When I pulled you out of the surf that day at Palm Beach you were a child without a thought beyond candy and general good times. I come back in twelve months to find you looking like a finished woman of the world. How do they manage it?"

"I'm sure I don't know," laughed Glad. "It sort of happens. In my case it must be spontaneous, for I haven't any mother, you know. But about you—was it the Orinoco again, or South Africa? I remember you were undecided."

"Oh, I went to South Africa," he replied, a little wearily. "It's a fine country, and I think of going back at once. I find that I have been away from New York so much that I forget the names of the buildings, and my friends have married women I don't care for, and who distrust me, and the shine artists take me for a greenhorn. It's lonesome to be a stranger in your own country. Won't you sit somewhere, and talk to me, and

let me know your name? I can't call you the Delectable Chicken now, you know."

"Why not?" fenced Glad. "I still think of you as the Adorable Savage. And I can't stay, but I wish I could. I really can't find time for half the things I wanted to do to-day."

"Yes, I understand," smiled the Savage. "The butterfly that leaps out of the chrysalis into a world of sunshine and flowers has a poor, colorless lot compared with the girl of the period. But when shall I see you again?"

"Oh, we're sure to meet. I'm always around the flower shops in the avenue when the sun shines, and I often come here to tea."

"Gazing at the flower shops," said the Savage with delight, "is quite my favorite amusement about four o'clock on fine afternoons. And I'm staying right here at the Walmont."

It was as simple as that. When Glad turned at the door leading into the hall and flashed back a smile of farewell at the Savage he was still standing and gazing after her. She fancied she could see even at that distance the tiny white wrinkles at the corners of his eyes that came from peering across great open spaces under a burning sun. She wondered why she had experienced such a strange hesitation about speaking to him.

During ensuing weeks they met several times, quite accidentally and with elaborate mutual surprise, and somehow it was always when they were both alone. They walked amid the throng of well-dressed people that moved up and down the avenue in the crisp sunshine, and they talked gayly about everything except that particular subject that began to be uppermost in the minds of both. It was about this time that Joshua Caine began to notice that Gladys revolved around him at times in an unusual way, fidgeting a little with books and cushions, and lingering after she said good night, as if she wanted to tell him something and was not quite sure how to begin.

"What is it, Chick?" he said once, in his great resonant voice. "Seen a robin's-egg-satin princesse that you

think would suit your frail style of beauty?"

"Papa, you seem to imagine that I can think of nothing but frocks," reproached Gladys. "And I'm about as frail as you are."

And she vanished with a host of jostling questions still at the tip of her tongue.

"Look here, Miss Delectable Chicken, who is a chicken no longer," said the Savage some days later, when they had again formally expressed surprise and gratification at the kindness of fate in causing their paths to cross with such regularity, "this thing is becoming scarcely proper, you know. Almost hole-and-corner, in fact. Why won't you give me a chance to scrape an acquaintance with some of your friends? I could manage it easily if I only knew their names, and you wouldn't have to appear in the business at all."

"But you said you were going back to South Africa to shoot something," said Glad, "and that you didn't care if you never saw two houses together again."

She became aware that his blue eyes were bent on her with an expression very different from the half-amused condescension that had once twinkled in them when he talked to her. He swallowed something in his throat, and the hard brown muscles worked stiffly behind his collar.

"I've altered my plans," he said.

Then, for the first time, Glad realized what mothers were for, and how much she had missed by not possessing one.

The same evening she called on Millie Templeton, because Millie was the most motherly person in her intimate acquaintance. In spite of the fact that she was not yet thirty and looked like an Elgin Marble in a Paris frock, Millie was the confidential adviser of half the girls in her set. She was a kind of calm, beautiful, soothsaying hermit, and when Glad entered the boudoir of the great, deserted, luxurious apartment that Millie lived in she wondered why the inspiration had not come to her much earlier.

"My dear, you're positively sizzling

with news," said the soothsayer, and drew her to a seat where the light would fall on her flushed and sparkling face.

"Millie, I've found a lovely man," burst out Glad, "and I feel sure somehow that I can get him if I want him, and——"

"And you think you want him?" said Mrs. Templeton, with sympathetic enthusiasm.

"I'm afraid I am going to," said Glad, nodding her head.

"You darling kid!" said Millie Templeton, and kissed her again.

For a moment they sat with their arms about each other's waist, and smiled at each other.

"And who is the Prince Charming?" asked Millie at length.

"I'm afraid that's a secret just now," hesitated Glad.

Millie Templeton's smile faded, and she drew her arm away, and folded her hands, and leaned back with eyebrows delicately raised.

"But he's brave, and kind, and a real man," said Glad quickly. "He hunts big game and travels all over the world. And he's tall and broad, like papa, and ever so handsome!"

"Of course. How old is he?"

"I think he said thirty-something."

"My dear child, no man is possible when he's thirty-something. They cease to be game at thirty-five."

"But there's something else, dear——" Glad went on doubtfully.

Millie Templeton's calm Grecian brow contracted in a puzzled frown.

"Don't tell me he's in politics!"

"No, he was married years ago, and they didn't agree," hurried Glad. "Of course, he's free now, but I'm so afraid papa would object anyway. Don't you think so?"

Pretty Mrs. Templeton held up her hands in horror, and let them fall limply back into her lap. Glad gazed at her as the gripped chicken awaits the descent of the ax.

"Whatever you do, child," said Millie Templeton, "be careful of the big-game hunting sort. Do you guess what sends most men out to hunt lions and grizzlies? It's expecting to get more out

of life than there is in it, and failing, and becoming peevish and desperate. That kind of man always thinks he will find some weird sort of moonshine happiness in the next place he is going to, or the next thing he is going to do, or the next woman he is going to marry. And, of course, he never finds it because he's looking for something that doesn't exist."

A premonitory tear glistened in Glad's fine dark eye.

"But Millie, dear," she protested, "I'm afraid I do want him already. It would hurt a lot not to see him any more."

"You dear, motherless thing, of course it will. But you've got to face it. It's a sort of stage one passes through, like measles or matriculation. If you were a boy, I should say you had an attack of calf love. I don't know what they call it in girls, because we were never supposed to have such emotions until recently. But that's what it is—chicken love. If he had been a mere boy, now, I would have expected it to last."

"It's a keen, glittering ax, Millie," said Glad, "and you don't have to chop twice."

She picked at the cushions, and strove with her whirling thoughts.

"I wish," she said at last, "that I could cherish a deathless passion for Lewis Waller or Weber and Fields, as May Hilyer does. It makes things so utterly hopeless, and safe, and convenient, because you can buy photographs of them and smuggle them away to your room, and slip out to matinées when you are tired of throwing stained-glass attitudes over cook books and giving orders to servants who know five times as well what they ought to do. But somehow the real thing is more attractive. Do you think I am wicked?"

Millie Templeton's cool, capable hand closed over Glad's on the cushion and held it fast, and when she spoke it was in the tenderest tone of a voice that possessed wonderful sympathetic range.

"You have only one throw, dear," she said. "There are women who can make a mistake and still struggle through to a maimed sort of happiness. But for

your sort and mine there's only one chance at the real gold. If you miss it, you find yourself left alone to wonder what your real name is, and to hunger for any sort of man almost who would fasten up at night, and keep the woman on the next floor from talking, and give you a regular place in society and family worries like other women have. You can't imagine the ghastly emptiness of most women's lives when marriage goes wrong."

"But you could marry again any moment if you cared to," argued Glad, opening her eyes wide at this new glimpse of serene, well-groomed Millie Templeton.

"Do you think so? I did at first, but I know better now. You can forget the merely worthless sort of man, clear him out of your mind as easily as he can take himself out of your sight. But the fretful, restless, big-game-hunting man is disastrous. He takes away something you can't get back, and it comes to sitting alone in the dark because you haven't the heart to turn on a light, and imagining you hear a step in the hall that you'll never hear again. And your friends stick to you in a kind of pitying way that hurts more than neglect."

Glad recalled the ivy-girl, and smiled a wry little smile.

"Frankie Baldry told me," she said, "that she became engaged by a sort of divine revelation. I don't pretend to anything like that, but I know I want him, and I think I can get him, and it's perfectly horrible temptation."

"It's a good thing for Frankie that she isn't fashionable, or she'd get a whole lot of contradictory revelations," laughed Millie. "But you'll always have a string of suitors, Glad, and you have to learn to hold the fort till one of them storms it, instead of letting down the drawbridge at the first knock. Now forget it, and I'll let you try on my new Paquin."

"You did right to frighten me," said Glad, rising. "I guess I needed it."

"You're a gallant little kid," said Mrs. Templeton. "I only wanted to put on the brakes a little, because if he's the right man you won't have to get him."

"Why?" inquired Glad innocently.

"He'll get you, dear," said Mrs. Templeton.

For a week Glad battled with a variety of mixed emotions, and the flower stores of Fifth Avenue knew her no more. At the end of that time, when the sun shone with tantalizing brilliance and the memory of Millie Templeton's ax had faded, she yielded to the sustained importunities of Bobby Vandeleur and went with him to tea at the Walmont. Bobby secured a table, and settled himself to look at her with intense satisfaction. But Glad gazed across the chattering multitude, and her heart leaped with a delicious mixture of joy and terror when she saw the Savage in his accustomed seat by the palm court.

"Bobby," she said presently, "I want you to do something really smart for me."

"As far as a fellow that never had any brains can be of service," said Bobby, in rapt admiration.

"You see that big man over there, the one all alone, with his chin on his hand?"

Bobby nodded, and proceeded to gape at her over his cane handle.

"Well, I want you to go across and talk to him. Men can do these things, and I don't mind waiting. And then I want you to bring him over and let me give him some tea. Oh, you needn't be afraid—you won't have to use force."

Bobby Vandeleur continued to gape.

"Do, Bobby, like a dear boy," said Glad, with an ensnaring smile. "It's a long time since I asked you to do me a favor."

Bobby hesitated, and dropped a cucumber sandwich on the carpet, and tried to grind it in with his heel. No one treats the violet carpets at the Walmont in that way unless very deeply pained.

"I won't do it," he said, stammering a little. "There's something crooked about it. What do you want with an old stiff like that, and you all legs and eyes still, like a young filly——" He stopped, choking, and turned his head away.

"Really, Bobby, you mustn't be indelicate," said Glad.

"I didn't mean it, Glad," responded Bobby contritely. "You're hard enough on me at the best, but when you ask me to introduce rivals and hit up the already painful competition, you devise a refinement of cruelty that I can't stand for."

"You're a clam, Bobby," said Gladys mercilessly. "You look hard enough outside, but when you open your mouth any one can see that you're spineless. You oughtn't to be afraid of competition."

"It isn't only that," said Bobby, with a quaver in his voice. "Some day I shall meet you on the avenue looking up at that guy the way you did last week, and I'll just have to land one on his nose. No, I positively shan't do it, Glad."

"In that case," said Glad finally, "I'll have to leave you for a moment, and talk to him alone. So you see that you only make it worse."

And with the calm of desperation Glad rose and threaded her way across the tea room to the Adorable Savage. As she noted a gleam of pleasure chasing away the lonesome look in his eyes she was filled with an almost maternal compassion.

"I thought you had forgotten me," he reproached. "I have stood gazing into the florists' until they must have thought I was a yeggman, with designs on the safe, and I have worn holes in the corridor carpets here keeping watch for you."

"But I've been thinking hard about you all the time," said Glad, with accustomed frankness.

"With the result, no doubt, that you have decided to regularize the position?"

Insensibly they were moving together into the corridor and away from the crowd. Glad turned a strained, anxious face back to the tables. Bobby Vandeleur was still gaping after them over his cane. The next moment they were in comparative quiet, and only the highest waves of the music and chatter reached them.

Glad looked at the set of the powerful muscles under the Savage's sleeve, at the massive shoulders, the square jaw, and clean-cut, immobile mouth, and then up into a pair of steel-blue eyes that sought an answer in hers. Then she looked down again quickly. Yes, it was going to be hard.

"I decided," she said, "that I ought to say good-by to you, but as soon as I saw you I forgot how to begin."

"But why on earth should you do that?" The Savage's eyebrows were raised in the pathetic expression of a child who receives a cruelly unmerited rebuff.

"I could tell you better," parried Glad, "if I knew just why you wanted to see me again."

"That's a real woman's answer. You can't imagine a man rapacious enough to want another life when he has been foolish enough to waste one, can you? But I'm not a cradle robber. You'll have better men than I am waiting three deep by the time you get ready to throw the handkerchief. I only want to be one of the crowd, and take a level chance with the rest. Surely you won't refuse me that?"

"It isn't fair," said Glad. "A woman is at the mercy of a man like you. I was quite certain when I came here that I was going to say good-by, and I haven't done it. When I see you I don't feel able to think properly, and—and I oughtn't even to be here with you now!"

"But surely——" he began.

"Oh, don't you see," interrupted Glad, stopping and facing him in the corridor, "that if I gave way now it would be the same all along the line? You know everything, and have done everything, and I'm only a little fool, and I'm afraid."

Her lip trembled a little, and she sank on to a seat where the corridor turned, and wondered if she were going to cry. Like most modern girls, she had a horror of tears outside the privacy of her bedroom.

"If I only knew," she said, with a quaver in her deep and promising voice, "that the—the woman you married before doesn't want you!"

The Savage said nothing, but when he sat down his face was very near hers. She saw the heavy muscles round his jaw quaver a little, and the hand on his knee showed white at the knuckles. His chiseled mouth, with its little, weary lines at the corners, fascinated her, and something seemed to be drawing her irresistibly up to it. She wondered dimly how it would feel to be crushed in those powerful arms, and kissed by a real man with a mouth like that—a mouth whose lips met hard and flat, not a pursy, boyish mouth like Bobby Vandeleur's.

Still the Savage was silent. Glad dared not meet his eyes, she dared not even look at that immobile, fascinating mouth now. On the corridor carpet his shadow seemed to be approaching hers by degrees. The corridor was deserted. Glad felt herself trembling.

"You lovely brute," she thought, "if you kiss me now, I'm done for."

It happened just about that time that a clerk in the main entrance used a telephone, and cursed under his breath. He was a smart young clerk, with a neatly oiled head, and his clothes and manner were snappy as the clothes and manners of hotel clerks have been since hotels were first invented.

"Say, where's Three-sixty-one hiding?" he asked a colleague. "Wouldn't it rasp you the way these ginks dodge around?"

"Looks like an actor after a sea voyage?" queried his fellow clerk. "He was just in the tea room, talking to a girl—and some girl, believe me."

The well-oiled one had an inspiration.

"There's nothing doing in the Grosvenor suite to-day," he said, snapping his fingers to a page boy. "Then that corridor's vacant. Here, boy, hop around there and call this telegram."

And so it followed that the brass-edged page boy burst round the corner where Glad was sitting with the Adorable Savage, yelling at the top of his distinct though puerile voice:

"Mr. Templeton!"

Even before the Savage reached for

his telegram Glad had sprung to her feet, wave after wave of cold realization dashing over her until she gasped and caught her breath like a bather taken unawares. The telegram fluttered in the Savage's hand unopened.

"Why, you dear, foolish, adorable Gump!" cried Glad at last, when the reaction left her braced and glowing with excitement. "You must be—you are—you were Millie Templeton's husband!"

"Then there are scores of people we both know!" cried the Savage, with dubious enthusiasm.

Glad sat down beside him once more, and faced him unafraid. By a singular reversal of positions it was the Savage who was tremulous and apprehensive.

"Oh, that makes it all easy!" said Glad. "To think you would leave a perfect, lovely creature like Millie to eat her heart out in loneliness, to come and play with a silly kid like I am, who doesn't even know her own mind. Men must be fools!"

"Millie Templeton hasn't any use for me," said the Savage, "or she would never have set me free with such alacrity."

"I thought it was a purely feminine habit to make a grievance of being taken at one's word," laughed Glad. "A man who leaves the best, sweetest woman on earth to spend his time shooting animals is so deluded that he wouldn't recognize happiness if he found it. Oh, I know I'm young and silly, but I've a suspicion that I've got more sense than you! As long as a woman needs you and waits for you the way Millie does, you're not free—you couldn't be married tighter if you got ten bishops to do it. Until you realize that you'll never be happy, because you won't deserve to be."

She laughed again, a deep little laugh that stopped short in the middle and ended in a deeper sigh. The Savage tapped his telegram absently, and stared at his toes.

"Now I must go back and apologize to Mr. Vandeleur," said Glad, rising suddenly. "If I ever see you again it will be at Millie Templeton's, where

you belong, and—and I do hope we may meet again soon!"

It was a rather paler and very subdued Glad who took Bobby Vandeleur's arm in the tea room.

"Rush me home, Bobby," she said. "I'm afraid I'm going to turn on the sprinkler."

Back in the corridor Harvey Templeton stared at his telegram for some time before he opened it. After reading it he remained still longer staring at the carpet, and gaping a little in a style singularly reminiscent of Mr. Vandeleur.

When Joshua Caine returned home that evening he was ambushed by a deliciously demonstrative daughter, who flung her arms round his neck in the hall, and pressed a damp handkerchief against his collar, and murmured foolishness.

"Well, well!" he roared. "I always knew I was popular in this household, but this gets almost embarrassing."

"Is my nose red?" asked Gladys fearfully.

"Doesn't look so to me," said Joshua Caine, holding her under the lamp. "Why?"

"I'm a wicked Chicken," said Glad, "and I deserve to have a red nose. And I don't deserve to have a towering human fortress of a father to inflict the horrible tale upon, but I'm glad I have."

"You needn't worry," said Joshua Caine, pulling her on to the lounge. "I've seen Millie Templeton."

"But she doesn't know the worst part," said Glad.

"And I sometimes go to the Walmont Hotel myself," said her father, grinning omnisciently.

"Oh, and you saw me? That little beast Bobby must have——"

"No, he didn't, either." Joshua Caine's face took on a more sober expression. "You see, fathers of chickens have to develop a sort of sixth sense, and second-sight, and a row of eyes at the back of their necks. You grew up so suddenly you caught me napping,

but I guess I'm well on to my job. Say, whom do you think I met going up to Millie's as I came away? Why, Harvey Templeton himself!"

Glad started and clasped her hands.

"Yes, I told her he was at the Wal-mont, and she wired him to come and see her if he thought he could stand it. He's a wild ass, but his heart's white. If you give that sort of man rope enough he always comes back."

"Oh, you lovely, lucky Millie!" sighed Glad.

She had been passing her hand over her head, and suddenly cast a handful

of hairpins on the lounge, and sent her chestnut tresses rippling down over her shoulders.

"I guess I'll stop being grown up for to-night," she said. "Life's too complicated."

"Oh, life's all right," said her father, with cheery optimism. "But it's a road full of big, whizzing red autos, and they sometimes catch an unwary chicken and leave nothing but a puff of feathers in the dust. Better stay around the coop a little, Chick, while I get busy and make it interesting for you."



THE GYPSY WINDS

FAR across the mist-gray world the gypsy winds are blowing,

Golden light behind the pines, and low star, silver pale,
Hill road, and plains' road, know their dawn-fresh going,
Stirred leaf and swaying grass patteran the trail.

Night winds, and light winds that call among the beeches,

Brushing soft past aldered pools, and rain-wet meadow grasses,
Bringing drafts of star-cool air from lonely mountain passes,
With breath of hemlock-scented ways, and green-gloomed forest reaches,

Far across the sun-swept earth the gypsy winds are faring,

Rush of speeding footsteps, and the highway dust upcurled,
Marshland and rickland know their noonday lairing
Down the whitely ribboned roads that loiter through the world.

Vagrant winds, fragrant winds, faint wildwood spices breathing,

Brookside mint, and meadow thyme, and swamp-sweet lowland sedges,
Scent of wild azalea bloom, dawn-flushed on sunny ledges,
And white-starred jasmine curtains flung through vine-wrapped branches
wreathing.

Far across the open world the gypsy winds are roaming,

Scent of moorland bracken, and the whisper of the sea,
Juniper and headland rose know their twilight homing,
When from out the star-pale world they wander back to me.

Sea winds, and free winds with reek of tar and shipping,

Bits of tramp-ship jargon, and the smiles of sun-browned faces,
Wash of nameless islands in the ocean's secret places,
And through dim coraled caverns the green tidewater dripping.

MARTHA HASKELL CLARK.

THE ONLY STORY

BY



MRS. WILSON WOODROW.

IT was on an afternoon in early October that Eileen Gardiner and Wilfred Malden met again after twelve years.

Eileen's younger sister, Frances, who painted every day from early morning until the light failed, had asked a few people to take tea in her studio, and Malden was naturally included as an old friend of the family.

To Frances, who forgot everything but her pictures, and whose sense of conventional nuances was rudimentary, it seemed the most natural thing in the world to write his name at the head of the list of those she meant to invite. To Eileen, so trained and disciplined in the conventions that no social situation could disturb her poised equanimity, it appeared a very different matter, and full of complexities. It struck a cold chill to her heart even to wonder with what measure of composure she could greet him across the gulf that lay between them, a gulf not of years, but of an ardent youthful love, with its vital remembrances of an anguished parting where the last words he had spoken to her were of an unforgettable heart-break and an unmasked reproach.

But her manner to Frances, and later in the day to Malden, held no suggestion of these tremors, and he apparently knew neither doubts nor hesitations, for he hastened toward her the moment he entered the room, ignoring every one else in his rapid progress.

"Eileen!" he murmured, taking her hands and looking down at her with that earnest, intent, nearsighted gaze of his.

She gave an involuntary sigh of relief. He had taken the initiative, and in the second of adjustment to his attitude—an attitude friendly, even affectionate, but quite unimpassioned—she had time to note that he had changed very little, and yet in a way very much. Very little in outward appearance, very much in an inner, intellectual, perhaps spiritual, way; but at the time it was beyond her to analyze this.

"All day," he said, smiling, but not withdrawing that searching gaze nor abating its intentness, "all day I have been wondering what the years have left us—you and me. I see now that they have taken nothing from you, but have brought you, instead, many desirable gifts."

The faintest touch of deepening color showed on her cheek.

"Beware the Greeks, likewise the years," she said, "when they come bearing gifts. At least, that's a woman's creed."

"You evidently haven't been afraid of them or their gifts," he laughed. "You look as if you had welcomed them."

"Some of them," she admitted, and now her easy tone, her bright, composed manner bespoke a certain guardedness.

"Those years!" Malden mused. "I am forty and you are—well"—he smiled charmingly—"a woman is, of course, as old as she looks. You are twenty-three."

He had forced the issue. She was too thoroughly a woman of the world to evade it.

"I was twenty-three when I saw you last, and that was twelve years ago."

Her tone was simple, matter of fact, but almost unconsciously she lifted her chin with a little thrill of triumph in the thought that with a bar of afternoon sunlight falling across her smooth, unlined cheek, lighting up her brown hair, and finding reflections in the topazes which sparkled here and there through the gauzes which fell about her tall, graceful figure, she could yet afford to make the statement to him or any one, could even glory in it.

She was also perfectly aware of the considerate isolation in which he and she had been left by the other guests, delightfully aware of the keen, interested glances over the teacups, of the whispers that ran from group to group; murmurs of an old romance, hints that the reason that Malden had never married was because of this beautiful woman, a widow now for the past three years. There were those who complained that the situation lacked the element of interest. It was too obvious.

Eileen had given him just one moment to receive the full impression of her words, then she turned definitely from any discussion of those years.

"You see," she said, putting her cup down on the table beside them covered with books, "your novels are all about. Why mention the generosity of the years to me, when they have brought your ship in so beautifully?"

A shade crossed his sensitive face, obliterating for a moment its light and animation.

"I have had my measure of success," he said, rather tonelessly, "some of the 'balm and the leaves, the wine and the honey'; certainly, too, 'the dreams reared high and the hopes brought low.'"

"You two have absorbed each other quite long enough," said Frances, coming about the table which served as a rampart between them and the other guests, "and every one is clamoring for the lions. Come out of your corner and roar."

Younger than her sister, she lacked both Eileen's beauty and poised grace,

and they differed as widely in temperament and manner as in appearance. Frances had the unrestrained, independent abruptness of a boy, and, while her hair was of the same rich bronze as Eileen's, her face had not the latter's regularity or repose. It was eager, piquant, full of change and emotion; the mouth laughed frankly, but the eyes were wistful.

Malden ventured some expostulation in reply to her peremptory command; he and she had always been good comrades, but she insisted that her afternoon must be a holiday even if he had to be butchered to make it so, and, laughingly ruthlessly drew them from their seclusion.

When Eileen had first known Wilfred Malden, he was a handsome, charming boy—well, a little more than that—of about twenty-seven years, tall and slight, with dark, intense eyes and a sensitive mouth. He was already known as a promising young writer, and made just enough not to live on. As he indiscreetly remarked, his earnings permitted him to live about five months of the year in respectable penury, and the remaining seven months in luxurious debt. Still, as he argued, when urging Eileen to marry him, he could always pay something on the general fund, which, if it failed to reduce it, owing to the general fund's specific tendency to roll up, yet showed honorable intentions, and was an indication of how prompt would be his payments when his hour at last arrived.

And Eileen had listened to him, and believed. She had wanted to marry him, she could not now recall just how much, but never again in this life did she expect to want anything half so much.

But her mother, then living, was that most afflicted of creatures, a widow with good social connections and no money, and there were two younger girls, Frances and Elise. Elise had since married, and lived abroad.

So when Alfred Gardiner, rich and with an air of sweeping everything before him, even Eileen's engagement to Malden, of which he was aware, but

which he chose contemptuously to ignore, had, after a brief, high-handed wooing, asked Eileen to marry him, a sigh of relief ran through all the family ramifications, and found an echo even in the outer circle of waiting friends.

Eileen was gently but positively given to understand that to refuse him would be one of those blunders which are worse than a crime, so Malden and she parted heartbreakingly, with despair in her soul, and a bitterness which he did not attempt to conceal in his, a bitterness augmented by the resentment he felt toward Gardiner.

And now Eileen had returned to New York, rich, free, far more attractive than she had ever been in her girlhood; and Malden, distinguished, able, better looking than ever, was unmarried.

If the possibilities of this situation obtruded themselves on Frances, she gave no sign, and as for Eileen, her heart rose at the contemplation. Everything was beginning all over again; life assumed the glamour of an enchanting fairy tale.

And so, for a season, it went on. Malden saw a great deal of the sisters. He often dropped into Frances' studio in the late afternoon, and frequently they drove far afield through the mellow autumn air, sometimes in Eileen's car, sometimes in his. But in this intimate companionship Eileen was increasingly conscious of the change which time had worked in him. In the past, he had always been so eagerly, sensitively responsive to her; now he was often absorbed in his own meditations, withdrawn to some realm upon which he seemed definitely to close the door between him and the world, and to which he never offered her the key or whispered its sesame.

"Malden has allowed himself moods," she said one day to Frances. "He never used to have them."

"It's the price the high gods set on achievement," said her sister, dabbling a brush absently in her palette.

"I have just been reading some criticisms of his last book," said Eileen.

"One critic speaks of his cold and polished technique; another, of the 'wintry brilliance of his style.' I wonder why? When I used to know him so well, he was neither cold nor reserved."

"Probably not," said Frances dryly, "but sometimes those sensitive natures suffer a blight. The frost fingers of some chilling experience touch them, and seem to congeal forever their spontaneous ardor."

She shot one quick glance at her sister as she spoke, but if Eileen suspected a hidden meaning in her words, she gave no sign, maintaining, as usual, her bright composure.

So Time, methodical spendthrift, wasted his minutes and hours, and drew upon the bank of eternity for further drafts. These two, the man and the woman, saw the moment of destiny advance, veiled, and Eileen held her breath and closed her eyes as her footsteps faltered on the threshold of a new life; and Malden's pleasurable content was obvious.

One evening while they still hesitated on the brink of fulfillment, the definite promises yet unspoken, it had amused them to dine together at one of the large restaurants, and as they sat drinking their coffee at the conclusion of dinner, an editor, famous alike for personality and achievement, paused to speak to Malden on the way out, and at the latter's request, joined them for a few moments, taking a seat between the two. Dominant, aggressive, occasionally irritable, he was in one of his lighter moods that evening, as full of high spirits as a schoolboy.

"By the way," he said, rising at last, one hand on Malden's shoulder, "how much longer are you going to keep me waiting for that short story?"

"Until I get the theme, the proper theme," Malden tossed back.

"There is but one, only one story." Wendell was boisterously, jovially emphatic.

Eileen, whose dreaming gaze had sunk deep into the scene of color, and light, and the kaleidoscopic movement of people about them, started suddenly as his words reached her.

Wendell responded to her questioning gaze.

"Didn't you know it, Mrs. Gardiner?"

"Dear me, no," she smiled. "I thought they were infinite from the numbers which are published."

Wendell looked down at her, his swift, piercing, comprehensive glance embracing not only her luxurious present, but also the rich shadow of an equally luxurious past. He smiled wisely.

"You surely know," he said, "but how shall I put it to make you remember? Eternal youth, the longing to give—the rich bestowal, the tender acceptance—the everlasting quest of an ideal." He ran one hand through his thick gray hair, and clutched the air for a moment with his big, cushiony fingers. "Oh, in a nutshell, Cinderella and the prince. You understand the symbolism of the glass slipper, of course."

He left them, and Malden turned again to Eileen to be struck afresh, not by her beauty exactly, but by the atmosphere which that beauty created about her, a perfection of detail, an exquisite sense of harmonizing values, blending until they encompassed her with a sort of an aura—life with the bloom on.

On their way home that evening he asked Eileen to marry him. His manner of doing so was charming, all that she or any woman could ask, but before she could respond to this expression of his hopes and his affection, he had turned squarely in his seat, and looked at her keenly, his face set in lines of the most positive determination.

"But there is one thing which must be very perfectly understood between us, Eileen," he said. "And that is this matter of money. I am asking a great sacrifice of you, but if you care enough for me to marry me, you must give up the wealth that Gardiner left you—to the last farthing, too, nothing held back, not even the jewels he gave you. If you and I are to start life together, it must be on that basis. I can give you all comfort and many luxuries, but certainly not the exotic atmosphere to which you have become accustomed. My queen, if you chose to share my lot, you

will have to abdicate your plutocratic throne. Am I asking too much for you to give, Eileen?"

She had drawn far back in her corner of the limousine, and as they whirled through the darkness he could not see her face, but presently she laughed a little.

"I shall have to join the ranks of the millionaires who are trying to throw away their money," she said.

"It is 'yes,' then?" he whispered.

Before she could answer the car stopped. Malden helped her out, and then followed her up the steps.

"I want to see you to-morrow afternoon," she said, rather hurriedly. "Frances is going to the country to paint, so we shall be quite undisturbed."

She slipped through the door without inviting him to follow her, and was gone before he could even utter her name.

The following afternoon was as golden without as those which had preceded it, but the chill of autumn penetrated the house, and when Malden made his prompt appearance he found Eileen sitting beside a fire of logs on the hearth.

As she rose to greet him, he felt that he had never been so admiringly aware of her grace and poise, the lines of beauty which even the fall of her garments suggested. She was as rare and perfect as a Japanese vase, a marvelously set jewel. Eileen never made one think of the lilies of the field. One regarded her as the product of an exquisite art, rather than of nature. In some way she even produced a background for herself. Wendell, the intuitive, had divined that, a background rich as one of Rembrandt's.

Malden put out both hands gayly, tenderly. He was smiling, but as he looked at her, the smile died.

"What is it?" he asked. "What has happened?"

She, too, smiled faintly, but her eyes, usually so clear and brilliant, were clouded.

"Nothing has happened," she reassured him.

For a moment or two she mused, as if she had forgotten him. He had drawn

a chair up beside her, and sat looking at her, his chin on his hand.

"You know, Wilfred," she said finally, "when a woman contemplates a new step, she is apt to look back over the old ones."

"Oh, Eileen!" He could not forbear an amused, indulgent smile. "How feminine! You women never deny yourselves the luxury of thoroughly overhauling the past and making yourselves delightfully miserable, do you?" He laid his hand over hers, clasping it warmly.

She withdrew it slowly.

"Oh!" she cried. "You frightened me last night, and I have been trying to think it out clearly ever since."

"I frightened you? I!"

"Yes; the resentment that you showed that you still feel even toward Alfred's memory—after all these years—frightened me. All night I lay wondering, wondering, if perhaps unconsciously it might not extend to me. If you had ever really forgiven me?"

"Eileen!" in wounded reproach. "How can you say such a thing? And you wrong me. I do not believe that I deceive myself when I say that it is not resentment that influences my stipulation about Gardiner's money. It is the belief, the unalterable conviction, that we must start fair and clean, without the shadow of the past between us."

"Ah, Wilfred, you should forgive me," she sighed, "for I paid, paid to the uttermost farthing, as you said last night. The pressure that was brought to bear upon me to induce me to marry Alfred was incredible."

Malden suppressed a little masculine sigh.

"But why go into all this?" he asked gently. "We have lived so far beyond it. What possible purpose——"

"Oh!" She clasped her hands and bent forward, her eyes imploring him. "Let me talk it all out at once, and then let us bury it forever."

"My dear Eileen"—his tone was gravely, tenderly courteous—"you know that I am always ready to listen to anything you have to say."

She nodded.

"I know. It's this, then: Loving you, I married Alfred. Then came the reckoning. In spite of my ambition and love of beautiful things, I had a heart. Oh, dear, I wish I hadn't. Something strange happened here." She struck her breast lightly with her hand. "I was ground between the upper and nether millstone, the laws of nature and the laws of man."

He tried to speak, but she shook her head; a long-buried passion seemed to tear its way from some submerged depths of her being, and shake her like a leaf with its undammed force.

"Oh!" She lifted her clenched hands, covered with splendid rings. "Think of law and custom sanctioning a marriage without love! There were days when I hated my jewels and my luxuries—my price; and when I loathed, loathed my body. But women have always bartered their flesh, and centuries of that tradition is in our blood. I—I—dreamed of freedom, but what could I possibly do out in the great world of struggle? I would be as helpless as a mechanical toy. The barter of the flesh? That was all I had been reared for, and I realized it in that black bitterness of spirit which thousands of women have known. Oh, it's all been said and written, hundreds of times, but to have experienced it leaves scars on your soul."

In that swift, backward rush of memory, where she lived again for the moment under old conditions, her eyes wore the look of all women, who, since the world began, have endured that joyless degradation of barter, yet in whom, now and again, the unvoiced, suppressed rebellion rises like a torrent, and breaks like straws the gates of brass and the bars of iron.

And now again he would have interrupted her, and again she imposed silence with a gesture of her hand.

"Do you know what brought me to my senses, as the world would call it? My vanity. My ravaged looks appalled me. I stopped thinking. I stopped feeling. You can do it by will power, you know. I made a fetish of my beauty, an art of my dress. Alfred was tremendously pleased with my so-

cial success, and so the years passed"—she looked at him with the cynicism of weary and desert ages in her smile—"the years bringing gifts."

Malden took both of her cold hands in his.

"And now," he said soothingly, "you are going to forget it all."

She did not answer, and he glanced at her anxiously, sympathetically, as she stood there, the shadows of the twilight closing about her, the fire a mere bed of glowing coals on the hearth. Her clear, regular profile was turned from him, its delicate perfection silhouetted against the white of the old colonial mantelpiece.

A wave of more spontaneous emotion than he had yet felt swept over him.

"Ah, but you are fine and strong," he cried enthusiastically. "You have transmuted a difficult experience into something beautiful—an exaltation of the soul."

"How can a degradation ever be an exaltation?" she asked involuntarily.

"Eileen," he murmured gently, "I know that you have suffered, but try to forget this morbid outlook. I will make it all up to you."

"Ah, will you?" she breathed, leaning nearer him. "Shall we go back and be boy and girl together again?"

"Not that." And now his face was sad, almost stern. "We can't. We tore, we wrenched ourselves apart. We destroyed all the tender shoots of our hearts, lopped them off, and left them bleeding. And then"—his voice fell rather drearily—"we followed the law of nature, and rooted ourselves in the soil each had chosen."

"The soil each had chosen," she repeated. "For you that soil was your profession. I was reading about you this morning. The critics say that you have never written the same thing over, never crystallized nor hardened, but have been steadily true to something they call your vision." She looked at him half fearfully. "What is it—this vision—that you and Frances talk of so often?"

He smiled down at her a little hu-

morously, a little regretfully, then his eyes brightened.

"Frances knows," he said confidently. "But something has always been missing"—and now it was his voice that rang with passion—"something you gave me once—those lost moments of eternal romance. You took them from me, Eileen, and you must give them back."

"Wilfred!" Her voice was panting, desperate. "Is it the vision you want, and not the woman?"

He swept her into his arms.

"The vision and the woman are one. You brought them both to me once, and you've got to give them back to me now." He held her so close that she could not breathe; he kissed her lips until they ached. "Eileen, I will crown you with poems that will make your jewels look like pebbles; I will wrap you in such shining tissues of prose that all the world shall wonder. The 'cold perfection of my style'"—he laughed aloud—"shall gleam with the scarlet of blood, and glow with the crimson of rubies."

She laughed, too, and wound her arms about him, and kissed him ardently.

"Let the poem crowns and the prose tissues go. You've written enough books. We'll live from now on. There's nothing that we can't do, you know—follow every whim, buy a kingdom, build hanging gardens and palaces if we want to."

He pushed her back from him suddenly, and held her at arm's length, a flash of chilled steel in his eyes.

"No," he said insistently, "you'll come to me without a cent. It would be an impossible situation—our marriage—unless you're willing to live on my income. So give away, throw away your millions, and come to me. We have our measure of youth, and we have love, and with them we'll 'recast this sorry scheme of things entire.'"

"Oh, but that's absurd!" she cried, and pressed her cheek in a passionate abandonment against his.

"But it's not absurd." He pushed her back from him again. "I mean it."

"Oh, never!" She laughed cajolingly, and looked at him. Then she moved back swiftly, her hand at her open mouth, an expression of fright, almost of horror in her eyes. "It is impossible," she faltered. "I couldn't stand it." She broke into wild sobbing. "I've suffered so. I've paid, paid in full for the way I treated you; and after Alfred's death I vowed that life should make it all up to me. I thought if I could make you understand how I have suffered, you wouldn't want to take anything away from me. You don't know what it means to have all this money—the freedom, the triumph, the power of it. It's all that people respect to-day. Think of what we can do with it. You mustn't ask me to give it up. It isn't in you; it isn't in any man to be so mad. Wilfred, dearest"—she stretched out her arms to him, her voice thrilled with emotion—"I must have you; I love you, love you, love you! But don't ask me to live in that tiresome, stupid, sordid way, on just your income. I—I couldn't."

At last he saw.

The fire flamed up suddenly from the back log, and illumined the room. Eileen stood there, her arms outstretched to him, the tears running down her passionate, pleading face. Her long, amethyst gown, with its touches of gold at throat and waist, fell about her in folds of grace. The flame and shadow mingled and encompassed her with a warm, dusky glow, the red reflections of the fire sparkling in the golden band which encircled her bronze hair. A current of air wafted to him the exquisite odor which floated from her perfumed, satin skin. She was as delicately barbaric as a Babylonian princess.

And now he saw, too, that the almost tangible atmosphere of beauty in which she moved, and which he had fantastically called her background, was only an

aura of possession. He did not doubt that she had suffered, or that she had been perfectly sincere in the expression of that suffering to him; but he now clearly realized that, although the anguish of degradation had pierced her heart, it had never touched the real passion of her soul—her insistent, insatiable demand for luxury and splendor. Her whole being was set toward results, and she had achieved them beautifully; but she had never spun them of the cobweb texture of her inner dreams. She could only create them from money.

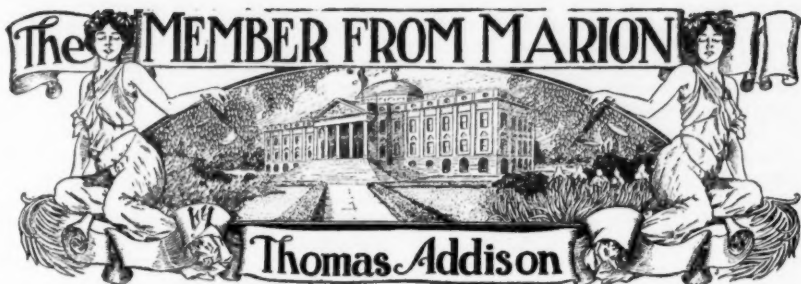
"I see," he said briefly and bitterly. "At last, I see. You can't, and I won't. That's all there is to it. You sacrificed me once to something you loved more than me. You've done it again. Good-by. Oh, it's no use!" as she interrupted him with a cry and broken words of expostulation. "We're done, you and I."

He picked up his hat and stick, but she wavered before him to the door as if to bar his exit; her eyes were desperate, but there was no capitulation in them, no yielding of the position she had taken. But before she could speak there was the sound of a light, quick step without, the door was thrown open, and Frances stood upon the threshold.

"Oh!" she cried. "Such a glorious day!" Her arms were full of yellow and purple flowers, her rich hair was tumbled, her little gray suede shoe was untied. "You here, Wilfred? I hoped you would be. I've brought you such a lovely story."

Eileen slipped through the door, and closed it softly behind her. In a moment of swift and heart-stabbing, feminine vision, she seemed to see Malden stooping to tie her sister's shoe, almost unconsciously noting—what must surely return to him in a later moment—how admirably that little foot would fit the glass slipper.





A MOTOR car raced up Jefferson Avenue to the east entrance of the statehouse. A man jumped out of the tonneau, and ran up the broad walk leading to the flight of massive granite steps that rose tier on tier to the main floor of the building.

The man skirted the steps, however, and presently plunged into an opening at the base of them. Turning sharply to the left, he ran along a passage that led him to the elevator wells.

"Wait!" he called out to an attendant who was just closing a cage; and, as he dashed in: "House floor! Hurry! It's life and death!"

The two other passengers in the cage looked at him curiously, but judiciously held their tongues. The man was Bill Edwards, chief of detectives. Evidently he was not in a conversational mood.

From the elevator, Edwards sprinted across the rotunda to a pair of heavy baize doors with oval windows in them. Through the windows he could see that the House was in session. Some one had the floor, and was making a speech, but fortunately it was not the person he wanted.

A page came loafing out through the door, and on him the detective laid a ponderous hand.

"Sonny," he said, "you go in there and find Neal—Daniel Neal, of Marion—and fetch him out to me. Tell him Bill Edwards wants to see him quick. I'm going to watch you through this door, and if you're not back here in two minutes—with Neal—I'll break your arm off, and throw it away!"

He pushed the boy inside, and watched him scurry down the center aisle.

The Honorable Daniel Neal, a young man of grave appearance, was leaning back in his chair, listening resignedly to the Honorable Andrew Parks, of Elmore, a bewhiskered, farmer-looking individual some twenty years his senior. Mr. Parks was expounding in sibilant whispers his views of "Senate Bill No. 331—Entitled An Act to Abolish Capital Punishment."

The interest in this measure was felt to the extreme corners of the State, and men and women had flocked to the capital to lobby for and against it. By agreement, the bill was to come up for its third reading at four o'clock that afternoon, and a vote would be taken immediately thereafter. Parks, a church man, was against the measure; Neal, who had been prosecuting attorney for his district until his election to the legislature, was in favor of it. Neither could make headway with the other.

The page touched Neal on the shoulder, then earnestly murmured his message to him. The member from Marion showed surprise, but got to his feet, and, with a word of apology to his colleague, strode up the aisle. The page ran ahead, and threw open the baize doors.

"Here he is!" he announced to the detective. Whereupon, having saved himself from dismemberment, he promptly vanished.

The detective led the young legislator out of range of curious ears.

"Neal," he said, "I'm afraid you hung

the wrong man down in Marion last fall. I've got a chap who says he killed David White. He wants to see you, but we'll have to get a move on. He's apt to croak any minute—shot through the lungs in a gambling hell."

Neal's face had gone dead white. He put out a hand to the wall to brace himself, and a strangled cry escaped him: "Matt Bedford innocent!"

"It looks like it. Get your hat and coat, and come along."

But Neal did not stir.

"God!" he groaned. "And his sister and father are here—working for the bill. Too late—too late!"

In the presence of this agony of spirit, Edwards felt strangely impotent; and yet there was pressing need for haste. So, pushing Neal gently toward the cloakroom, he urged:

"Go get your things. We've no time to lose. You'll find me waiting for you at the elevator."

He walked away, frowning to himself. He knew the tragedy of Neal's life—that duty had compelled him to prosecute and send to his death the man whose sister he had hoped to marry. And now this new turn of affairs had made a bad matter worse.

"Damn circumstantial evidence," he muttered, "when it comes to making a man swing on it!"

Neal joined him. They went down in silence to the basement floor, and hurried out into the grounds and around to the broad walk leading to the gateway. And here they came face to face with a prematurely aged man leaning on the arm of a young woman in whose eyes a whelming sorrow lived.

Neal halted, and, drawing aside, bared his head before this couple. It was on his lips to cry out to them Matthew Bedford's innocence; but the fact was not assured, and he choked back the words. Better ignorance than hopes falsely raised.

And so he stood, bending low, as one who, seeking pardon, would humble himself into the very dust to win it. For a fleeting instant the young woman's misty eyes met his, and then were

turned away; but the old man, suddenly holding himself erect, marched on, looking neither to the right nor to the left.

The statehouse clock boomed out the hour of three.

"Come," said Edwards, touching his companion's arm; "we'll have to hustle if you want to get back in time to vote."

"Nothing shall prevent me," returned the other from between set teeth.

As the car started down the avenue, Neal looked back. Hattie Bedford and her father were toiling up the first broad tier of granite steps.

From all sides, people were now pouring into the building. They thronged the galleries of the house, those unable to find seats standing massed around the walls. To the favored few the privilege of the floor had been extended, and in addition to the fixed settees in the rear of the chamber, folding chairs had been impressed into service to accommodate them. Among these favored ones were the Bedfords. Neal had sent them tickets, taking precautions, however, to veil their source.

Father and daughter were objects of deferential regard. Their case was known, and in the minds of many there was doubt of Matthew Bedford's guilt. To the last, he had affirmed his innocence. His wife believed in it, and his father and sister believed in it. To them he had died a martyr to the law.

Men made way for this couple, who so quietly sought their seats—stepped aside, as do we all, to let the majesty of sorrow pass. They had come here—Heaven knows at what cost of self-humiliation—to sit in living protest against a law that in the name of justice added one murder to another; that, indeed, went farther, and would take from a man his life without absolutely final evidence that his life was forfeit.

For weeks past Senate Bill No. 331 had held the attention of the public. It had been canvassed by press and pulpit, had been discussed in city clubs and village post offices, had found its adherents and opponents in crossroad stores and remote mountain smithies. It was the one thing in which politics

played no part, and party ties cut no figures.

The measure had passed the upper house by the barest majority; it was predicted that it would fail in the lower by a like majority. A poll of the house by an enterprising newspaper had shown that of a total of one hundred and eighty members, ninety-seven were against the bill. For it was a thing about which a man could speak his mind. There were no "interests" to be served, no alliances to be remembered, no private ambitions to be advanced. It was a clean-cut moral issue in which one was free to cast his vote in plenary accord with his conscience—whether that impelled him instantly to exact an eye for an eye or give the transgressor a lifetime chance to repent of his sin.

When, at four o'clock, the bill came up, only the enacting clause was read, and the clerk proceeded to call the roll. Debate had been closed with the second reading.

An unusual silence reigned. An air of solemnity rested upon the lawmakers. They were sitting in judgment on the lives of men unknown—men who, under the inscrutable dispensation of fate, might prove to be of their own blood; might even prove to be of themselves, or of their children's children yet unknown.

Here and there throughout the chamber spectators followed the roll call with pencil and paper, jotting down in opposite columns the ayes and noes. Every member was in his seat save the member from Marion. He was recognized to be a staunch advocate of the measure, and his absence caused comment. As vote after vote was registered and Neal failed to make his appearance, the wonder grew.

The clerk had come to the D's.

"Daniels," he called.

"No."

"Davis."

"Aye."

"Downs."

"Aye."

"Drew."

"No."

And so the record went with sing-

song monotony until the letter M was reached. Seventy-eight votes had been cast. So far the ballot stood forty-five against thirty-three in favor of the measure. Of the remaining one hundred and two votes to be polled, fifty-eight were necessary to pass the bill. And still the member from Marion was conspicuous by his absence.

On the pale face of the girl sitting back near the door of the floor a bitter smile was shadowed, and in the eyes of the old man whose hand was clasped in hers scorn and hatred grew. He leaned over until his lips almost touched his daughter's ear.

"He's a hound!" he whispered fiercely. "A slinking, sneaking hound!"

The young woman patted his hand soothingly.

"Don't, dear," she murmured. "Don't excite yourself."

The list of M's was long—seventeen names.

"Mabley," called the clerk.

"No."

"Madden."

"No."

"Magee, of Madison."

"No."

"Magee, of Salem."

"No."

And then the clerk involuntarily paused. The baize doors were pulled back, and forcing his way through the crowd was seen the tall form of Daniel Neal. Behind him came Bill Edwards.

Neal walked down the aisle to his desk. His face was set and stern. Edwards took up a position by the door.

The clerk went on with the roll. When he arrived at the letter N the vote stood fifty-four to forty-one against the bill. To insure its passage, fifty of the remaining eighty-five votes would be necessary.

"Nasby," read the clerk.

"Aye."

"Nash."

"No."

"Neal."

The member from Marion stood up.

"Mr. Speaker."

"The gentleman from Marion."

"I rise, sir, to a question of personal privilege."

The speaker nodded. Before going on, Neal looked around upon his fellow legislators. That he was strongly moved was evident to them all; that something out of the ordinary was about to happen was felt by onlookers and members alike. A hush as of the stillness of death fell upon the chamber. Back under the gallery near the door Matthew Bedford's sister pressed both hands upon her heart to still its beating.

"I am aware, Mr. Speaker," began Neal, "that debate on this bill is closed. Yet occasions, sometimes arise which are superior to all rules, and I wish to beg of this house a hearing for a momentous experience that has befallen me, and which bears vitally upon the measure before us."

A motion by Parks, of Elmore, to suspend the rules prevailed, and Neal went on:

"As some of you may know, I was until recently the prosecuting attorney for my district. In the course of my duties, I was called upon last fall to try for murder a man who"—the speaker's voice faltered—"who was my friend. You perhaps remember the case—*The State versus Matthew Edwin Bedford*, indicted for the murder of David White."

Neal paused, and wet his lips with his tongue. It was some moments before he proceeded. Then he said:

"It is necessary to my purpose to recall to your minds the salient features of the crime—necessary, because presently I want you to picture yourselves in Matthew Bedford's place, and in mine.

"David White was a money lender—an old man who lived alone in a house on the outskirts of the village of Goshen. Bedford was a young man—thirty-one. He was married, and had three children, in age from two to six. He owed money to White on a chattel mortgage that was about to expire. It was known that Bedford wanted the mortgage renewed, and White would

not consent, and that in consequence there was ill feeling between the two.

"On the night of August tenth, about nine o'clock, a neighbor of White's, while on his way home, saw Bedford come from around the rear of White's house and strike off down the road to the village. This, however, was nothing unusual, as the old man kept his front door always locked, and made his callers come to the kitchen door.

"The next morning early a man who daily delivered milk to White found the kitchen door standing open, and instead of leaving the milk on the steps, as was his custom, thought he would go in and place it on the kitchen table. He did so, and discovered White lying dead on the floor, with a knife wound in his throat. The knife, covered with blood, was lying near him. It was a horn-handled clasp knife with a blade three and a half inches long. On the plate was scratched the initials 'M. E. B.' It was, in fact, Matthew Bedford's knife. He himself freely admitted it. He said he had gone to see White to make one last appeal to him. When he got home he missed his knife, and found a hole in his pocket, through which he presumed it had dropped somewhere."

Neal ceased speaking. He wheeled slowly, sweeping with his eyes the ranks of the spectators on the floor until at last they lingered on one face.

"That, Mr. Speaker," he continued, in tones vibrating with suppressed emotion, "was the evidence, stripped of details, on which I, a sworn officer of the law, unable to evade a duty that I would have given my life to escape—that, I repeat, was the evidence on which I prosecuted and convicted, and on which the law hanged, an absolutely innocent man!"

A low cry came from under the gallery near the door, and through the crowded chamber ran a sound like the shuddering of wind-tossed autumn leaves. Neal took from his pocket a folded paper, and held it up to view.

"Mr. Speaker, I have just come from the deathbed of the man who murdered David White. This is his signed con-

fession. His name is Martin Hayes. He was born in Goshen. He was known for a gambler, and was suspected as a thief; but there was nothing whatever, so far as human knowledge went, to connect him with the murder of David White.

"On the night that Matthew Bedford went to plead with White for an extension of his mortgage, he forestalled a visit from Hayes. Hayes had planned to rob the old man, thinking he kept a store of money by him. This, however, was not the case. He had nothing of value in the house.

"Hayes lurked out of sight until Bedford went away. Then he stole up to the kitchen door, and was about to open it, when, lying on the ragged mat at the top of the step, he saw a clasp knife, and picked it up. It was Bedford's, and we know how it was lost. White resisted Hayes, and was killed with Bedford's knife. Hayes got away unseen by any one, and Bedford went to the gallows for Hayes' crime—went protesting to the last his guiltlessness."

Again Neal paused, and this time he looked inquiringly from face to face of those about him, asking of each a silent question. Then he turned to the tribunal, and, with a gesture eloquent of despair, held out his hands.

"Mr. Speaker, I stand here before this house with hands stained with the innocent blood of a fellow man. What cleansing waters does the State I serve offer me in which to lave them? My heart is torn with grief for the shame and desolation I have brought into the lives of those who were my friends. What Lethæan draft can the State hold to my lips that will make me forget the ruin I have wrought? Can I rest in peace because the law that robbed Matthew Bedford of his life throws its protecting mantle about me and proclaims that I but did my duty? Will that thought smooth my pillow to-night, or bring ease to my spirit on the morrow?"

"Is it, Mr. Speaker, a good law—a just law—that can make it possible for its servants to be placed in a position to feel the crime of murder lying heavily on their souls? You cannot legis-

late that sense of guilt away from me, but you can legislate away the statute that makes it possible to impose the burden on other servants of the law.

"Mr. Speaker, the law, as I construe it, is for the restraint as well as for the punishment of crime. It is not a weapon of revenge, but of justice. It should be tempered with mercy. It should seek to correct evil quite as much as to chastise it. Now, I have yet to learn of one instance wherein an act of legalized murder deterred an act of illegal murder. You may hang a man to-day, and to-morrow in the same community another man will commit the same crime for which the criminal of yesterday paid the penalty. So what does this law effect? It simply removes from life a being in the very climax of his sins, and hurls him headlong into the presence of his Maker.

"I hold, Mr. Speaker, that to live and suffer within prison walls is punishment worse than death; and yet so to live may, under God's great mercy, lead to the soul's redemption. And, Mr. Speaker, towering above all other arguments in favor of the abolition of the death penalty stands out this one supreme truth: In the case of wrong convictions—and there have been many such—it gives us the opportunity, inadequate though it may be, to make some slight amends for our blundering blindness. Had the law now upon the statute books of the State been repealed a year ago, Matthew Bedford would this day be restored to the arms of his wife and children."

In sudden abandonment of all pretense of parliamentary proceeding—an action that in the stress of the moment went unchecked—the young man stretched forth his arms in passionate appeal to the entire assemblage, and cried out:

"And what of Matthew Bedford's wife and children? What of his aged father and young sister? Can we restore to them the husband, son, and brother? Can we give them back the peace and happiness we destroyed? Because we must—perforce—expunge from the records the false entry of his

guilt, and publish to the world, so far as can be, the truth of his innocence, what—what, in God's name—have we done, after all? The man was hanged as a criminal—slain more brutally than would be a dog that had gone mad. He lies in a felon's grave, and though we may raise his body and pay to it the tribute of remorseful tears, and reinter it in hallowed ground, what poor, pitiful recompense is this to those who loved him, and but for us would have him with them at this very hour!

"What, I ask, can the State whose laws we must enforce—what can the State do to repair the wrong it has inflicted on Matthew Bedford's desolate widow and his helpless children? It has taken from them their staff and support—the breadwinner whose pride and joy it was to see them cared for. What can it tender them in return? Would it offer them of its wealth to take the place of one whose loving ministrations knew no price? If not this, what other possible thing can it offer? Alas, it is a bankrupt—a beggar—in all that these stricken hearts most crave!"

Neal waited an instant—and in it were heard the sobs of women; then faced the tribunal.

"Mr. Speaker," he slowly said, "it is better, I contend, that a hundred guilty men should go free rather than that one who is guiltless should be called upon to suffer. On the measure before this house my vote is aye!"

He sat down amid silence that was profound until broken by the speaker's voice:

"The clerk will proceed with the roll."

That functionary began again his singsong task. When he came to the P's, Andrew Parks voted "aye," and looked at Neal. But he was sitting with his eyes fixed on his desk, oblivious of his surroundings.

When the letter W was reached, it was seen that the bill would pass. The vote stood eighty-seven in favor to sev-

enty-eight against, and there were but fifteen names left on the roster. Of these, ten voted for and five against the measure. But before the result could be announced, seven members claimed the privilege of changing their votes, and the bill finally passed by one hundred and four to seventy-six.

Instantly upon this the house adjourned. There was no applause. Members and visitors filed out as from attendance at a funeral. Yet Neal sat on, absorbed in thought. None of his colleagues spoke to him in passing. They could see that it was his wish to be left alone.

Presently the great chamber was deserted save for Neal and three silent forms by the door. One of these, standing apart, was Edwards, the detective chief; the two others were Henry Bedford and his daughter Hattie. They still retained their seats. The girl was weeping quietly. The old man held her hand in his, and caressed it ceaselessly. The fire and the fierceness in his eyes had died away.

Edwards looked at the motionless figure down in front, then at the couple near by. He hesitated a moment, and then walked over to them. He touched the girl on the shoulder, and, as she raised her eyes, pointed to Neal.

"Go to him," he said, in his gruff, authoritative way. "He needs you—and you need him."

With this he turned on his heel and left the place. Henry Bedford relinquished his hold of his daughter's hand, and rose to his feet.

"Come," he whispered, and led the way toward the door.

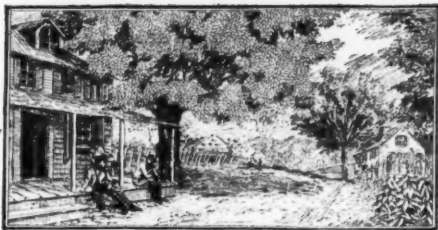
But here he stopped and waited for his daughter, who had lagged behind. When she had come up to him, he smiled upon her gravely, and, taking her by the arms, faced her down the center aisle.

"The man was right," he said. "You need each other. Go to him."

And he, too, went out.

Poke

by Richard Fisquill



THESE here hams," the old backwoodsman set forth, "has been cured with hick'ry. They's two years old. I don't spec you ever eat sich hams in all your born days, if you knows how to cook 'em; an' if you don't know, my gal Poke here will show you how."

The old man's proposition was to give the load of hams for a year's schooling, his daughter Poke to be the scholar. And as a faculty meeting had just adjourned, most of the Palmyra professors were in the front yard, gathered about the old man's wagon, thinking of ham—boiled ham, broiled ham, fried ham.

"I make a motion to take him up," moved the professor of penmanship, sniffing at one of the hams. In support of this measure, he added: "For Gawd's sake, let's do!"

Meanwhile the owner of the hams stood in front of his team, his rifle over his arm, his dogs at his feet, his daughter in the wagon. He was solemnly chewing tobacco as he looked from one member of the faculty to the other. They interested him, especially Professor Crabbe. When his proposition had been accepted, he turned to Professor Crabbe, and said:

"Now I wants you to be good to my gal." Then he ordered: "Poke, git down out o' the wagon an' help these here folks tote their hams!" The faculty in a body objected. The old fellow was taken back. But he issued a new order, which nobody countermanded:

"Then, gal, say good-by to the dorgs. You won't see 'em no mo' till Christmas."

The dogs were seven. They replied to Poke's farewell by jumping at her face, licking her hands, yelping, barking, growling.

"That'll do," decided the old patriarch from the wagon. "So long, Poke!"

He drove down the hill without looking back a single time, though the dogs did repeatedly. Out on the big road the wheels of his chariot rolled into a cloud of dust, upon which the old man seemed an instant to float; then the dust cloud covered him.

And Poke, who had been watching, said: "Good-by, pap."

They had fried ham for supper that night—that September night; and, with the exception of Professor Crabbe, everybody was satisfied with this world. The professor of penmanship ate slice after slice of happiness. His was an easy job—only two hours a day of wrist-movement instruction to give, after which he might play his accordian on the back porch. But with Professor Crabbe it was different. Mark Anthony Crabbe was professor of belles-lettres by day and professor of courtship by night. He ran the parlor as well as literature.

The people of Palmyra did not understand by education merely the ability to make chlorine, explain "Macbeth," or call a weed by its Latin name. They wanted their sons taught how to get

good positions, and they insisted on their daughters being given ample opportunities of contracting such tender ties as would lead to matrimony. They had choke-bore guns for other ties. Still, a professor's presence, in addition to choke-bore influence, was deemed advisable.

Professor Crabbe, therefore, ran the parlor. He sat near the organ, in a rocking-chair, and read the *Christian Advocate*. Over by the window, on a sofa, a farmer's daughter or a butcher's niece perfected her social education at the expense of a young gentleman who either sat on his hands or played with his feet; for the sofa was short gun barrels long, and Eve eternally enticing.

Professor Crabbe was small and thin—you would have guessed that. He was dainty. He was also a pee-aitch-dee. But he had heard the old story so often that he had never married. Nor had he always heard the legend addressed to a third party. The first-year girls adored Professor Crabbe. He was their freshman course in affection. And the more a first-year girl was backward in books and forward in the years of our Lord the higher she usually ranked in earthly devotion to Professor Crabbe. That was why the poor man did not enjoy the fried ham of Poke's father. Miss McPherson filled him with apprehension. Pocahontas McPherson was Poke's inflated name.

According to her own statement, she was "goin' on" twenty-five. Certainly she seemed to be going on; nor had she ever let up, apparently, a single day in her life. Poke was tremendous; not fat, but lithe and tremendous. She looked like the Statue of Liberty wearing a sunbonnet and walking around with a country stride.

Pocahontas said she had Indian blood in her; nobody doubted her statement. She further announced to the supper table, and to Professor Crabbe, that her father was the best shot in the hollow, and never missed his man. Nobody doubted that, either.

Nor could anybody at the supper table doubt for a moment the profound impression that Professor Crabbe had

made upon Miss McPherson. Without being invited, she had taken the seat at his right. She feasted on him with her eyes, as she sopped her biscuit in good ham gravy. And what was new to everybody at the table, even to Professor Crabbe, Pocahontas *whined* when she spoke affectionately. They had first noticed it as she told her dogs good-by. But she whined yet more ominously when she spoke to Professor Crabbe. It would have been a moan, this whining of Poke's, if it had not somehow suggested contentment; it would have been a snarl, but it was very sweet. I doubt whether you have ever heard such a note. Professor Crabbe had not; and he spent a large part of that September night saying "dear me" to his pillow.

Till now his remedy for lovesick girls—girls sick of love for him—had been simply to choose the right sort of young man in the coeducational college of Palmyra, and have him appear in the parlor with the suffering young lady. Nature took care of the rest. But was there, he wondered, a single young man in college who would consent to keeping company with Poke? Not only her age but her size was against her. The young men, as a rule, were big and tall themselves; they liked something small to pet.

"She is destined to be a source of much unrest to me," Professor Crabbe confided to his pillow. "She imposes," he went on. "She superposes, even superimposes. She also appears to be fervid, of a perfervid temperament. Then her voice, or rather, I should say, one tone of her voice, is disconcerting, quite highly disconcerting. I should call this tone dulcet."

Professor Crabbe with a final "dear me" adjusted his crushed pillow, and said his prayers.

In selecting a mate for Pocahontas, the professor of courtship doubtless did his best—and that, we are informed, is all angels do. But Mr. Bud Hart did not look like anybody's best; certainly not an angel's. His contemporaries called him "Hard Bud." And Bud looked hard. He suggested a mortgage.

He made you think of a draft. He was, as it were, a human symbol of hard times. When Professor Crabbe approached him on the subject of Miss McPherson, he replied:

"Sure, I'll tackle her, 'fessor." He would have tackled anything.

Bud had fed threshers, blown up stumps, coultured, mauled rails, broken mules, killed hogs, sledged rock, pushed spikes into crossies, and done everything else that was hard to do in that hard part of the world. And now, at the age of twenty-seven, he was come to culturalize himself—to study penmanship.

Bud wanted to be a shipping clerk in a tobacco warehouse, where he would take a brush and a pot of lampblack and execute artistic addresses on the smooth ends of hogsheds. He had often watched these lampblack artists; they sat by the derrick, chewing tobacco, till the niggers had rolled a hoghead out; then they got up, picked out the best end of the hoghead, flourished their brush, and into existence came a black address that was as easy to read as a circus sign. It beat anything Bud had ever seen.

And into his soul little by little there had entered the ambition to be a shipping clerk. As much tobacco as he wanted to bite off, nothing to do but mark hogsheds, sit down, and get thirty-five dollars a month—that was high life. But he had to learn how to write before he could be a shipping clerk. He was, therefore, studying penmanship and dreaming warehouse dreams. He had consented to the parlor proposition, much as if it had been an invitation to help a neighbor kill hogs or thresh wheat.

Poke viewed the situation differently.

"What you want me to see that there bunch of bones for?" she inquired of Professor Crabbe. And her whine was some sort of searching minor chord.

"My dear young lady," the professor elucidated, "it is to perfect your social education. Nothing is more conducive to culture and soul uplift than refined intercourse with our fellows."

Pocahontas, her arms akimbo, began

to rock from side to side. It was a way she had of concentrating her thoughts. Then she asked:

"But what you reckon me an' that fellow of yours is goin' to gas about, shut up down there in the parlor?"

"Why," Professor Crabbe amplified, "why, you will speak to him about your youth. You will tell Mr. Hart about your early joys. He will speak of his. Your memories will intertwine. A bond of union will be established. Friendship will arise, perhaps something deeper, and both your lives will be richer in consequence."

With her arms still akimbo, Poke kept on swaying from side to side. She went in one direction, her two immense braids of hair went in the other. The process made Professor Crabbe dizzy.

"Don't—dear—Miss—McPherson!" he entreated, reaching out and touching her.

Poke stopped immediately—to laugh; and she laughed as peculiarly as she thought. Miss McPherson doubled up, shook like a human earthquake, rumbled, snorted.

"Tich me again!" she invited.

Mark Anthony Crabbe called upon forty-five years of earthly experience to come to his aid, but they came not. Poke, all aglow, stood before him, waiting to be touched.

"What—why—" he faltered. "My dear young lady, at what are you laughing?"

"I don't know, 'fessor," Poke admitted. "I don't know 'tall, but somehow you jes' tickles me to death!"

Professor Crabbe felt himself on both sides, then buttoned his coat. It was a favorite gesture of his, and one that usually preceded a burst of eloquence. But eloquence came not now. He hesitated, hemmed, hawed.

"You talk so sweet," Poke went on. "Talk some mo'!" And she put rapture into her gaze.

Professor Crabbe reached up into space, and caught hold of Hard Bud.

"But I wish to hear *you* talk," he managed to vocalize. "I wish to hear you talk with Mr. Hart in the parlor this evening."

Poke heaved a sigh that sounded like a collapse. Professor Crabbe resumed:

"You will put on your most becoming gown, and——"

Here Poke gasped. She was clearly perfervid. Professor Crabbe seized his advantage. He was now himself once more.

"In polite usage," he went on, "you know a *dress* is called a 'gown.'"

"You don't say!" panted Pocahontas. Then she whispered: "But what you call that other thing?"

Professor Crabbe whispered back:

"You allude to that as your *robe de nuit*!" And though the professor put too much stress upon his mute *e*, he pronounced the French *o* quite correctly as an English *u*.

Poke, therefore, inquired:

"Rubber what?"

"*Robe de nuit*. It is a foreign expression, and means the night garment."

"But 'tain't made out of india rubber?"

"By no means."

"Lord," Poke remarked. "You certain do learn lots in this here college. I'll tell pap about that Christmas."

Then feeling, doubtless, that the distance between her and her god was too great ever to be spanned, she promised with a whining sigh that made Professor Crabbe unbutton his coat.

"Well, if you want me to see that fellow, 'fessor, I'll see him for your sake. But you've got to stay there an' tell me how to do, 'cause I ain't never done no courtin' in my life jes' cooped up in a parlor an' settin' down."

Nor had Hard Bud ever in his life been cooped up in a parlor with a young lady and a professor of courtship. But, being slow of thought, he had not realized his unfitness for the job until he found himself taking up one-half of the sofa in the college parlor. Pocahontas had not yet come down. Professor Crabbe was away over to the other side of the room, shuffling the last copy of the *Christian Advocate*. Bud trembled.

"I didn't know what I was buckin' up against," he muttered to his soul.

Then he begged Professor Crabbe to

let him take a chew of tobacco. This the professor of courtship haughtily denied. Bud cowered.

"But say, 'fessor," he finally invented, "s'pose I jes' step out a secon' till she comes down an' you git her to goin'! Then I'll sorter come in accident like, an' say: 'Well, by Jenks, if you two folks don't look comfortable! If you don't mind, I'll jes' squat down here myself an' take a hand!' Or somethin' of that sort. You know what I mean, 'fessor!"

Professor Crabbe knew only too well that if Bud were allowed to leave the coop he would not return.

"All this," he explained, "constitutes uplift. Be calm, young man! Nothing impresses the womanly mind so much as calmness, manly calmness, dignity. I should say. Observe the elephant, Mr. Hart! Why does this proud beast produce upon our minds the concept of strength? Because of its size? No. 'Tis because the elephant is ever calm, calm in his joy, calm in his wrath, calm in his repose. Be calm, and you will achieve victory both over yourself and over others, a notable victory, I should say."

But when Pocahontas brushed through the door Bud thought his last hour had come. The young lady, however, without even looking in his direction, swept over to Professor Crabbe, and, turning slowly before him, asked:

"How's this here for high?"

"Sh!" whispered the professor, rising. Then he said aloud: "My dear Miss McPherson, may I have the pleasure of presenting to you my friend, Mr. Hart?"

"But I want to first know," split Pocahontas, with a whine, "what you think of this here—gown!"

Mr. Hart heard the awful word, saw a white garment, and turned his face to the wall.

"God A'mighty!" he prayed, forgetting elephants.

Nor did the whispering that reached him from the other side of the room contribute to his calmness. Poke insisted upon knowing Professor Crabbe's opinion of her costume. Professor

Crabbe, in a whisper, was trying to tell the young lady that she should not thus call attention in public to her personal appearance.

"But I ain't goin' over there till you tell me I'm all right!" Bud heard Poke announce. And that did him good.

"Dam' if she ain't scared, too," he philosophized. He even dared to look away from the wall in Poke's direction. "An' 'tain't nothin' but jes' a white dress," he noted.

Then he arose bravely and ducked his head by way of salute—a polite gesture, which neither Poke nor her professor saw. Mark Anthony Crabbe did not himself seem to be as calm as an elephant. He was whispering and pleading, holding one of Pocahontas' hands, and trying to lead the young lady over to her half of the sofa. But Poke was whining, hanging back, her head first on one side, then on the other. And she was saying:

"Now don't, 'fessor, don't! You jes' stop an' don't!"

Bud took courage. The young lady was not acting like an elephant, either.

"But, Lord, she's a whopper!" he admitted.

"My dear—my dear Mr. Hart," Professor Crabbe begged, "let me introduce you to my friend, Miss McPherson!"

Bud was as calm as anybody in the room. He ducked his head again; and this time Poke saw him. But instead of returning his salute, Miss McPherson merely screwed up her nose as she glanced his way.

"Be seated!" ordered the professor of courtship.

Bud groped after the meaning of Poke's grimace; it did not harmonize, he thought, with bashfulness. Professor Crabbe continued:

"Now, my dear young people, while I am perusing the *Advocate* yonder by the organ, stay here on the sofa and endeavor to entertain each other."

And with a speed that suggested flight the good man betook himself to the shelter of the *Advocate*. Poke followed him with a look, and kept her eyes turned in his direction. Bud kept thinking of the ugly face Miss McPherson

had made, and, not knowing what else to do, he imitated the elephant. Not a sound in the parlor, except the rustling of the *Advocate's* leaves. Bud concluded it was time to cough.

Professor Crabbe looked up questioningly.

"S'pose you jes' set us goin', 'fessor," Bud suggested.

And this time there was no mistaking Miss McPherson's sentiments; she turned and made for Mr. Hart a slow, ugly face that sent a cold chill up his back. It was a grimace of the worst description. Then from Professor Crabbe came the timely suggestion:

"Miss McPherson, speak to Mr. Hart of your youth."

"'Fessor," whined Poke. And I really must try to give you an idea of how she whined that time. Did you ever hear a cello *whine*? Did you ever hear a cello that seemed strung with heart strings, and that brought lumps into your throat as it whined? Well, that's the way Pocahontas said 'fessor. And he forthwith put down the *Christian Advocate*, and came over unto her. Before he got there, however, Mr. Bud Hart received in the eyes another ugly face, and of such malignity that he arose and offered his half of the sofa to Professor Crabbe.

"My dear Mr. Hart, keep your seat, I beg you!"

But Mr. Hart's back was full of shivers.

"No, sirree!" he swore. "I'm goin' to clear out!"

Professor Crabbe hastily felt himself on both sides. He was not yet entirely lost.

"But," he declaimed, "this will never do! It is unprecedented! It partakes, it will partake, I should say, of scandal! Mr. Hart, you shall not leave this room under any pretext! I will expel you from college! I will expel you, sir, if you defy my authority!"

Bud slowly and solemnly scratched his ear. This time, without knowing it, he imitated the elephant. He was not a fool—as no one can be who has put up with twenty-seven years of hardship. And as he scratched his ear

he scratched into his head a pretty fair idea of how the land lay in the parlor coop.

"Well, I won't leave," he kindly drawled. "I won't leave, bein' as you don't want me to." But catching another look from the reckless Medusa of Wildcat Hollow, Bud hardly knew what to do. Finally he compromised, which is the sign of sagacity. "'Fessor," he promised, "I'll jes set over there an' look at the *Advocate* while you're gettin' her goin'." When you want me, you can jes' holler."

Bud then retired to the professor's chair, over by the organ. To keep from seeing any more of Poke's faces, he held up the *Christian Advocate* as a screen—behind which he was not long in taking a very excellent chew of tobacco. Thereafter he ruminated.

Next day, while Mr. Hart was engaged in making wrist-movement flourishes under the artistic supervision of the professor of penmanship, he felt the hand of his neighbor grope an instant underneath the table, then find his leg, and administer a pinch that would have disturbed an elephant. Raising his eyes, Mr. Hart saw Miss McPherson at his right.

"Look here," she breathed, without lifting her eyes from the copy book, "I'm sorter sorry I poked my tongue out at you last night."

Bud rubbed the place Pocahontas had pinched.

"I didn't mean nothin' against you," she continued. "You're all right. You jes' keep on comin' to see me, an' I'll give you somethin' for a present."

"What'll you give me?" Bud inquired, rubbing his leg with one hand, writing with the other.

"What you want?"

"For you to say."

"Bud——"

Bud grunted.

"I've got a cat."

Bud whispered a sort of disdainful snort.

"I don't mean no tom cat," explained the daughter of the hollow. "But I've got a pet wild cat that can lick the stuff

fin' out any dorg that ever showed his side teeth!"

Bud focused his mind on wild cats, in an endeavor to ascertain if he needed one in his business. Pocahontas continued:

"He's a pow'ful fine cat. Jim Stieger offered to swap me a calf."

"A bull calf?"

"Git out. A heifer calf."

Bud knew the value of a heifer calf. However, he continued with caution:

"An' what you want me to do for this here old tame wild cat of yours?"

"Come an' see me in the parlor."

"How often?"

"Once a week."

"An' when'll I git my cat?"

"Christmas."

"Take you up."

And Bud went on with his wrist-movement flourishes, while Pocahontas without a blot executed the requisite six lines of the good old copy: "Many Men of Many Minds, Many Birds of Many Kinds."

"The situation is anomalous," Professor Crabbe finally established. "Positively anomalous, I should say, and absolutely unprecedented."

It was a cold November night, a little before bedtime, but the professor had retired. He was not well. He felt poorly, and he also felt poor. He was sitting up in bed, sneezing, catching cold, struggling with his pillow and with destiny. Winter had come early. It beat against Professor Crabbe's window in the form of sleet, and against his heart in the form of gelid solitude. Underneath the cover, wherever he put a hand or foot, he felt solitude. Solitude took up so much room he could not lie down. Solitude crept up his back, passed over his shoulders to his interclasped arms, and down them to his shivering knees.

"'Oh, solitude!'" he quoted. "'Oh, poverty!'" For Mark Anthony Crabbe was professor of belles-lettres.

Never before had he wrestled with both solitude and poverty at one and the same time. He had frequently felt poor, he had also at times realized that he was a single, solitary man; but these

concepts heretofore had assailed him separately. To-night, however, solitude and poverty had joined hands like two twin demons, and they were too much for a small, thin man. He perceived that he was forty-five years old, that he was sitting up in bed, all by himself, in the dark, and that he did not have a shirt to his back. Professor Crabbe shivered. He heard the wind "making moan." The wind whined. It reminded him of Miss McPherson's voice.

"It clamors for admission," he mused.

Then he went back in his thought, and reconstructed the startling events of that fatal evening in the parlor below.

Struggling as ever with the dictates of decorum, Professor Crabbe had told Miss McPherson that for the sake of didactic instruction she might look upon him for a very few minutes as Mr. Bud Hart, and that for a very few minutes she might in a low voice endeavor to entertain him by relating some fond memory of her youth.

Pocahontas, accordingly, had perfectly got down to work, and astonished the professor of belles-lettres. She had positively entertained him with incidents of her youth, and with dainty little descriptions of her home in Wild Cat Hollow. Mr. Hart, meanwhile, in the professorial chair near the organ, solemnly chewed tobacco and looked over—as well as under—the *Christian Advocate*.

Everything had gone on swimmingly until Poke made the statement that her father owned the big woods which stretched from Pilot Rock to Stieger's Mill. This assertion did not fail to interest Professor Crabbe; but it more than interested Mr. Hart. As soon as the words left Pocahontas' mouth, Hard Bud threw down his religious paper, and blurted out:

"Well, now, look here, Poke McPherson, if your daddy's got all that land, you've got to give me more'n any sickly tame wild cat for settin' here holdin' your game bag!"

To which the young lady had replied:

"You low-down yellor dog!"

Something inside Professor Crabbe told him not to call for an explanation

of the wild-cat agreement to which Mr. Hart had alluded. Accordingly, he fenced in this wise:

"My dear young people, when ladies and gentlemen enter the drawing-room, they leave petty dissensions at the threshold and mount to the high plane of intellectual intercourse."

Bud, however, had refused to mount.

"Look here, 'fessor," he complained, "I've possum-hunted all over them woods, an' I know what I'm talkin' about. But I sure didn't know that the old Ike McPherson what owns them woods was this here gal's daddy. An' she can jes' bet her boots she's goin' to give me more'n any wild cat. Why, that there gal's rich as pisen!"

Miss McPherson certainly looked like poison at this moment; that is, she looked deadly dangerous. The sounds she was emitting were not whines; they suggested claws, teeth, and a lashing tail. Professor Crabbe immediately deemed it his duty to arise and stand between Pocahontas and Mr. Hart. Finally he had prevailed upon Hard Bud to back out of the parlor, his face to the enemy. Then in an innocent way, which I will not disclose, he had induced Miss McPherson to retire to her room. But Poke had retired in some such way as the grizzly bear retreats; she was as mad as Wild Cat Hollow.

This, then, was the situation Professor Crabbe called "anomalous." I believe you will agree with him. Furthermore, if you are a professor in a country college, and for twenty years have been irregularly drawing the curiously involved stipend of an educational missionary, you will not blame Mark Anthony Crabbe for making an imaginary survey of the woods that stretched from Pilot Rock to Stieger's Mill. At one moment in his fancy he even hunted the succulent opossum.

The situation was unprecedented. All this vast estate explained why Poke's father had been able to produce a whole load of hams. Pigs without number evidently roamed through the domain, eating acorns. Deer abounded, hard wood, coal perhaps. And Professor Crabbe sneezed; he was catching cold, he was

cold, he was alone in the world, he was passing poor. Only the wind to keep him company—the whining wind. It reminded him of Miss McPherson's voice; it called, entreated, threatened, and caressed.

"Dear me!" Professor Crabbe sighed. The next instant he started violently; the wind had so perfectly imitated Poke's voice as to produce a low 'fessor. "This I should term an hallucination," he decided.

Immediately thereafter he fell back in bed, a cold, limp, well-nigh lifeless thing. It was not the wind. Poke was calling to him through the keyhole:

"'Fessor, you done gone to bed?"

Professor Crabbe covered his head with two good quilts; through them, however, he heard:

"If you ain't gone to bed, 'fessor, I want to see you. I'm hurtin' all over."

Some sort of psychic force jerked Professor Crabbe from his gelid couch. Going to the door, he put his lips near the keyhole, and whispered:

"My dear young lady, if you are suffering, it is clearly my duty to confer with you."

"I'm sufferin' awful, 'fessor. I'm goin' to ask pap to shoot Bud Hart."

"Go to the parlor," ordered Professor Crabbe. "I shall join you in an instant."

But the professor trembled so he could hardly dress. The situation had reached a crisis; the very marrow in his bones told him that. Something was about to transpire. The fanning of Fate's wings could be felt.

And Professor Crabbe, all buttoned up wrong, shaking, pallid, and disheveled, but trying to smile, tottered finally over the parlor threshold and fell—into Poke's magnificent arms. She carried him home to her heart. When she saw by the pretty glow from the dying grate that she had not smothered him to death, she dropped him upon the sofa. Then, exultantly looking down upon her captive love, she said:

"Won't pap be proud!"



MILLICENT

AS dauntless as a daffodil
That braves the bending breeze
So laughs her soul from out deep eyes
Brown as some leafy pool that lies
In shade beneath the trees.

So sure the lure of her bright hair
Bared to the sunshine's gleam
That all night long I must pursue
The shimmer of her fillet blue
Through many a mocking dream.

Her fingers, what strong, slender things!
Unkissed and ringless they.
I think Diana's bow was bent
By hands like those of Millicent
That toss my heart away.

EMILY SARGENT LEWIS.



VI.—MELITA

THE shooting of Raphael Denver occurred two years before Mrs. Georgina Revelstone visited Pine Creek in search of Marcus Aurelius Lavender.

Five miles out of the settlement, and on the left of the trail to Calgary, there is a clump of pines which afforded sanctuary, in a blizzard, to the half dozen emigrants, Denver among them, who formed the nucleus of the creek's population of to-day. By the irony of fate, it was in that clump of pines that the misguided man cheated an indignant populace, and was found with a hole in his left temple and the savings of a neighbor in his belt. He was a man who had sprung from a good stock, and the shame of being marked down as a common thief dictated only one course of action.

The Marquis was assisting in the branding of a steer on the ranch run jointly by him and James Ryneck, when one of the hands brought news of the tragedy. Within three minutes he was urging his great white horse toward the pines, and the men grouped about the silent thing on the ground raised their hands relievedly. "The Marquis!" they muttered, with an air of finality that was a tribute in itself.

The great-limbed, fair-haired Lavender had come into his kingdom. Less than eighteen months had passed since he, and Jimmy Ryneck, and Ryneck's little wife and child had come up from the States to start the new life which the

father of Ryneck had vaguely outlined; in that period of time the two men had proved the logic of the old man's philosophy.

"Get back to nature," he had said, "get back to nature, where men are taken for what God made them; get away to the Northwest, where men grow wheat, and you'll win through. You're too strong and yet too weak for the cities."

The great Star Ranch, sweeping away to the western horizon, where the wheat belt met the prairie, was a reward for three men, the adviser and the advised. In the little settlement the Marquis was a king, and no king ever justified so fully the confidence of his people. In the early days he fought men and conditions with the old impulsiveness that sent him down in disgrace from Oxford and butted him against the spikes of fortune in the cities.

It was the Marquis who closed the doors of the settlement against Red Rube and his followers, who were in the habit of riding over from Bleak Point and stirring up things; Red Rube was beaten to a jelly, and tied to the saddle of his horse; his followers made no attempt to avenge the humiliation of their leader.

And it was the Marquis who, in the following winter, found the said Rube beneath his horse in a drift, and carried the man to Bleak Point's apology for a hospital.

But the greatest fight which the Marquis fought was with himself. It took place on the fringe of the wheat belt, and the call of the cities, and the company of men and women, and the lights, and the old careless life were part of the weaker self against which he had to war. The Marquis won, and the thud of the great white horse's hoofs as it raced back to the homestead which the conqueror shared with the Rynecks rang in his ears like sweet applause. And step by step he climbed upward to the throne in that kingdom where men were taken for what God made them.

"Shot himself!" One of the men gathered in the pine clump was kneeling by the side of Denver, and seeking to stem the dark-red flow from the temple.

"Dead?" the Marquis asked in a subdued voice, and the man nodded.

"And Melita?"

"Reckon she's up there, alone, working out the chances of the old man returning to-night."

"At Folly Ranch?"

Again the man on the ground nodded; then, spreading a handkerchief over the face of Denver, said slowly:

"What's to be done with the girl?"

"She must be told a lie," said the Marquis, "and I'll tell it. Better keep it in mind in case you should hurt her with the truth. Denver met with an accident while cleaning his gun. We'll wipe out all that we know about his weakness, and on the way up to the Folly I'll think out a scheme for the girl's future."

What the Marquis said to Melita nobody in the settlement inquired. Enough for them that after Denver had been committed to the earth the Marquis lifted the girl on his white horse, and slowly led her to Star Ranch. In years she was probably twenty, but the absence of a mother's care—Denver lost his wife when Melita was ushered into the world—militated against the development of the girl's mind. There was simple trust in her big, dark eyes, and, though her speech was refined as the result of Denver's training, the ring of childish innocence was unmistakable.

Ryneck and his wife were sitting on the veranda when the Marquis and Melita rode up. There was no need of any explanation. Mrs. Ryneck took the girl in her arms, and kissed her with the tenderness of a mother, and her own little girl clutched at Melita's hand, and all three passed into the house. Ryneck, sitting back in his chair, watched them till they disappeared; then, turning to the Marquis, said:

"We were expecting you both."

"It was the only thing to do, Jimmy," said the Marquis.

"It was the only thing we could expect you to do," said Jimmy.

"And it won't put a hundred dollars on the household bill."

"The company of the girl will be worth twice that amount to the wife," was the simple reply.

And thus it was that Melita came to Star Ranch. For two years she shared the varying fortunes of the household, and by her simple faith and devotedness endeared herself to those who had succored her. Naturally, it was Mrs. Ryneck who first detected in the girl's eyes the reflection of a new thought toward the Marquis. Her husband laughed at the bare suggestion.

"You don't know the Marquis," he said.

"And you don't understand women," was the retort.

"Melita's a child," he gave back, "and, besides, the Marquis comes of a good family. He has never told you of—"

"He never tells any one anything about himself," she interrupted. "It's easy enough to read him without asking him to open his lips. A child! That will make it all the harder for him to disappoint her."

"How disappoint her?"

"To tell a child that its dream of fairyland is only the result of indigestion is crueler than to suggest to a middle-aged spinster what she might have been."

"You've been reading novelettes," said Jimmy, with the conclusiveness of his sex.

"I've been reading Melita," said Mrs. Ryneck quietly.

She had seen in the girl's eyes what was hidden from the Marquis and her husband. She had seen expressions which she didn't understand, and what a woman doesn't understand she suspects.

Certainly, the Marquis lent little support to her theory, for his attitude toward the girl was more that of a parent or guardian than of a lover. True, his great blue eyes sparkled when of an evening he rode in from the belt and Melita went out to meet him, her cheeks flushed, her dark lashes lowered. True, he sang to her as they rode in, she on his saddlebow, but it was the song of a knight returning from the lists; and she, to him, was only one of the hundreds of ladies who had clapped their white hands and showered rose petals and bay leaves from their seats around the arena.

In other moments, when the spirit of his fighting forbears was subordinated to the less romantic thoughts of the possibilities of the growing crops, he spoke to her in a manner that would have nonplused a more astute woman than Mrs. Ryneck. There was nothing of the lover in that curt "Melita! My whip!" or "Melita! My boots!" or in her simple "Yes, Marquis!"

And then Mrs. Georgina Revelstone came!

The wheat had been threshed and sent East. The winter had set in—the long and dreary winter which tests the character of a man more than does the toil of the spring and summer. The snow came earlier than usual, and from the steps of the veranda of Star Ranch to the very rim of the world a great white mantle spread itself. For the Marquis, and Ryneck, and every hand they could muster there was much to be done in the way of erecting shelters for the cattle that had not gone East in consequence of a slump in prices. On the western fringe of the ranch there were two or three thousand sheep to be protected against the severity of the weather until a deal which Jimmy was negotiating had been successfully carried through.

The Marquis left the homestead be-

fore daybreak, and was working like a Trojan among the farm hands when Melita rode out to him with a message that a lady and a gentleman had arrived from Calgary.

It might have been his fancy or the reflection of the snow, but it seemed to him that the blood had deserted her cheeks; and her voice, always low and musical, was pitched in an unusually low key. He threw a few words of instruction to the men, and whistled softly to his horse. Melita, standing off a few paces, watched his movements with a far-away look in her eyes. She had slipped her arm through the bridle of her pony, and was waiting his word to mount. His left foot was already in the stirrup, when he glanced across at her. Was it tears that made her eyes glisten like the snow when the sun strikes upon it?

"Melita!" He had swung himself into the saddle.

"Yes, Marquis."

"Come here, child. So! Hi! Bronson, tie up that pony; it's winded. Now, Melita!"

He leaned over, gripped her round the waist, and with ridiculous ease lifted her up beside him, holding her so that she lay in the hollow of his left arm, her eyes looking up into his.

"Sing, child," he commanded, as the white horse bounded forward.

"I cannot sing—to-day, Marquis," she answered simply, then closed her eyes.

He opened his lips, and in a rich baritone broke out: "Oh! Who will o'er the downs wi' me?"

The snow began again to fall. A flake fell full on her closed eyelids, and she looked up with a start. They were traveling at the gallop, but so firm was his grip of her, so beautifully balanced his seat in the saddle that she might have been at rest in a cradle. He had thrust his soft hat on the horn of the pommel, his head was thrown far back, and the long, fair hair seemed to laugh at the capers of the wind. And so they came to the steps of the veranda, and the exclamation of surprise that burst from the lips of the waiting Mrs. Revelstone awakened the girl from a dream

in which she was riding on the back of an eagle high up against the sky. Poor Melita!

"Marcus! Is it really you?" Mrs. Revelstone, clothed in furs, sprang down the steps, and held out her hand. "You great big giant! Is it really you?"

And the Marquis, flushing to the roots of his fair hair, gently carried Melita to the veranda, then turned with sincere pleasure to Mrs. Revelstone.

"The last person I expected to meet," he said softly.

"All the way from Montreal, -Marcus. We heard the news there, and decided that it was only our duty to come across the continent and break it to you."

"News? It is a long while since I left England, Mrs. Revelstone; there should be a great deal of news——"

"When you get back," she interrupted.

"A contingency I had not considered," he said quietly, motioning her to the house, where Melita, Mr. and Mrs. Ryneck, and Mr. Horatio Compton, Mrs. Revelstone's brother, were gathered.

"Come!" said the Marquis. "Let me introduce you to my partner and his wife, and to Melita. Where are you going, child?" She had moved away, but at the sound of his voice she turned quickly and lowered her eyes. "Stay here," he said, "and share the news which Mrs. Revelstone has brought."

The girl came back to his side, glancing shyly at the radiant figure that had sunk on a pile of skins.

"Mrs. Revelstone is an old friend of mine," said the Marquis. "Why, she and I played together as children. Is it not so, Mrs. Revelstone?"

Her brother blundered in with a weak, insipid voice that caused Jimmy's brows to contract.

"Old sweethearts, don't you know," he gurgled.

"And Revelstone won," said the Marquis, with a low laugh.

"Revelstone is dead," said the woman in the furs, and immediately the smile left the eyes of the Marquis.

"Forgive me," he hastened, holding out his hand. "I had not heard of it."

"How could you, when no one in the world seemed to know of your whereabouts? I had been alone nearly two years, and it was the memory of my own pain and suffering that made me urge Horatio to come out here that we might soften your blow."

"My blow?" The Marquis' face paled. "It is ill news that you bring."

"Your uncle died, childless."

"Lord Wisbeach!"

"And, of course, your father succeeded to the title."

The Marquis looked at the listening Ryneck, who was vainly trying to extricate himself from a tangle of views on heredity.

"Jimmy," he said, "forgive the levity, but try to realize that I am now the *Honorable* Marcus Aurelius Lavender. Do you think that the crops can possibly fail if we shouted that fact from the roof of the house?"

"You are something more than that," said Mrs. Revelstone, glorying in the opportunity to be melodramatic. "You are Lord Wisbeach."

All the light went out of the big blue eyes.

"My father——" he began in a dull voice.

"Died in the pulpit—in harness," said Mrs. Revelstone softly, "and your dear mother is awaiting your return to civilization. She would have come out here herself if your brother had not prevented her."

The Marquis swayed a little, walked unsteadily to the door; then, in a voice that was strangely unlike his own, said:

"Mrs. Ryneck will attend to your needs. Pray pardon me a while."

And he passed out to his room, his great chest heaving.

And from the veranda, heedless of the snow that whipped in from the north-east, Melita watched an imaginary eagle soaring away among the clouds.

Three days passed, and to Mrs. Ryneck, at any rate, the true mission of Mrs. Revelstone was revealed. A handsome young widow does not cross a bleak continent in winter merely to soften a blow which the telegraph and mail coach could have inflicted.

Marcus Aurelius Lavender, the nomad, was interesting as an old sweetheart; as Lord Wisbeach, with a considerable rent roll, he was a fascination. Her story that she and her brother were in Montreal when they heard the news of the Reverend J. H. Lavender's death almost immediately after succeeding to the title was perfectly true; the touch about the little mother awaiting the return of her son was Mrs. Revelstone's artistry or artifice.

What happened on that morning in Montreal when brother and sister heard the news might be epitomized in a few sentences. Compton said: "There'll be a rush for him." Mrs. Revelstone said: "We're on the spot." Compton observed: "Let's go and rout him out." Mrs. Revelstone rang the bell, and looked up the Pacific Railway service. When a Mayfair widow has a title in view, a hungry panther pursuing an antelope is as slow as a caterpillar by comparison.

On the second morning after her arrival at Star Ranch, Mrs. Revelstone began to play her cards with the deliberateness of a Chinaman at poker. Already the question of the Marquis' early return to England had been discussed, and intuitively she read his thoughts. It was a reference by her to the social life that awaited him—the novelties which a score of well-known hostesses had arranged for the season—that showed her the working of his mind.

"That life has no charms for me," he had said. "Idleness is one of the cardinal sins."

And, springing lightly into the saddle, he had called to Melita to accompany him on an inspection of the new shelters.

It was then that Mrs. Revelstone realized there was only one way to his good graces. Laughing girlishly, she begged Ryneck to supply her with a horse; then, with agility that was eloquent of Rotten Row indolence, she climbed, unaided, into the saddle, and rode on the left of the Marquis. His smile was sufficient compensation for the subconscious feeling that she had sacrificed some dignity

in the presence of Melita. They rode on for five hundred yards before Mrs. Revelstone, chafing under the taciturnity of the other two, turned in the saddle, and inquired if it were a custom of the country to remain silent during a gallop.

"There is a charm about silence," said the Marquis smilingly. "Melita and I ride for miles without uttering a word. Is it not so, Melita?"

And Melita, with a furtive glance at the other woman, answered shyly:

"Yes, *my lord!*"

Mrs. Revelstone, the girl's monitor, turned her head quickly so that the Marquis might not mark the flush on her cheeks. There was dead silence for a few moments, then he spoke:

"You make an apt pupil, *Miss Denver*," he said, and lapsed again into silence.

There were tears in the girl's eyes when a moment later he glanced in her direction. Regardless of the presence of Mrs. Revelstone, he leaned over and touched Melita on the shoulder.

"Now, you know how it hurts, little girl," he whispered.

That night Mrs. Revelstone and her brother held a consultation, as the result of which the man drew the Marquis out of doors on the pretense of seeing the beauties of the country by moonlight. Ryneck was seated before the fire, notebook on knee, and engaged in calculating the profits of the year, when Mrs. Revelstone walked into the sitting room. He made a move as though he would put away all thoughts of business, but she checked him with a graceful little gesture.

"You will feel lonely without Mr. Lavender?" she suggested.

Jimmy looked up sharply, and scrutinized the delicately penciled face.

"He hasn't gone yet," he answered bluntly.

She frowned slightly, and crossed to the piano which the Marquis had installed for the use of Jimmy's little girl. Running her fingers lightly over the keys, she threw her next words over her shoulder:

"A peer of the realm as a rancher!"

"Better that than a drawing-room lounge." Jimmy returned, with a lowering of his brows.

"It would be an insult to society if he remained here," she said.

"And the Marquis is just the kind of fellow to insult society. You should hear him talk to Melita about the ladies of thirty who can't skin a hare and know less about boiling a potato than I know about—about you."

She smiled at the ludicrous analogies, and, leaving the piano, came over to the fireplace.

"It would break his mother's heart," she said in a low tone, "if he did not return to assume his title. And this little work girl, Melita—who is she?"

"Melita is one of us," said Jimmy curtly.

"Mr. Lavender appears to take a great deal of interest in her?"

Jimmy's eyes were half closed as he made reply:

"Last fall my little girl broke her arm, and the Marquis rode over to Bleak Point to fetch the only doctor that happens to live in these parts—I was down with a twisted knee at the time. There was big snow, and we all knew what that journey meant. He was away two nights, and we grew terribly anxious—there are some nasty drifts between here and the point, my lady. Melita knows the country as well as any horse on the ranch, and she went out to look for the Marquis. She reached Bleak Point without getting a sight of him, sent the doctor here, and then stumbled about the country in search of the Marquis."

"It was in the afternoon of the third day that a crowd of boys from the point came upon the two. They were at the bottom of a drift. The Marquis' horse had slipped, with him underneath. He was unconscious when the girl found him, and, as she couldn't lift him, she turned her pony loose with a message written on the Marquis' collar, which was fastened to the saddle."

"The Bleak Point boys caught the pony, and when they got to the drift they found Melita in a crazy condition, but doing her best to keep the big fellow warm. My lady, she had taken off most

of her own clothes and wrapped them around him. And what's more—she nursed him through one of the worst fevers that I've seen in a man. Now, if a woman does all that for a man and he isn't 'interested' in her, there's no place for him in a country like this."

Mrs. Revelstone sighed affectedly.

"I shall certainly urge him to settle a sum on the girl," she said.

"And if I know anything about the Marquis," said Jimmy coldly, "you'll be catching the next mail to Calgary if you talk in that strain to him."

"But surely you don't suggest that he has any serious intentions toward the girl?" She opened her eyes in amazement.

"I don't believe he has any serious intentions toward the world," said Jimmy. "Speak to my wife about him—she is a better student of human nature than I. Ask her what she thinks of the Marquis as a peer of the realm, and she'll laugh at you. My lady, the Marquis doesn't belong to this age. According to my wife's analysis, the Marquis' great-great-grandfather's ditto was the man responsible for that little trouble in Carthage—I'm quoting her, so don't let loose any questions—and the Marquis is in direct touch with the old gentleman's spirit. Ah! You should have seen him fight in the old days! Just like a great—"

"Polar bear?" she interrupted, with a cynical smile.

"Like a polar bear," he agreed, "and as white as one, my lady. You should have seen him hold up Bleak Point when the water gave out, and there was only a mouthful for each of the kids in the settlement. He would have strangled any man who laid a finger on the bucket!"

"But this Melita's father was—was a very common person. I believe that he was shot—"

"He was found shot," Jimmy corrected.

"Took his own life rather than submit to a trial for stealing."

Jimmy went to the door and closed it firmly.

"I fancied that I heard something,"

he said, in an undertone. "No, my lady, he was found shot, and that's all there is to it."

Once more she crossed to the piano.

"Of course"—she smiled—"you agree that it would be a terrible thing if Mr. Lavender allowed sentiment to override his discretion?"

"Better talk to him about that," was the reply.

"I shall," she said, in an aggrieved tone of voice. "I have already spoken to the girl, and she recognizes the hopelessness of her position. I confess that she's a fascinating little creature. Illiterate, but fascinating. Why! Would you believe it, my brother has fallen desperately in love with her?"

And even as she spoke Mr. Horatio Compton galloped up to the homestead. He had left the Marquis attending to "some beastly sheep that had allowed themselves to be buried in the snow—silly asses!"

No word passed between Mrs. Revelstone and her precious brother during the next ten minutes, but she shot a glance at him when Jimmy's watchful eyes were averted; he left the room ostensibly to search for a book. Two hours later—it was nearly eleven o'clock—the Marquis returned.

"Where's Compton?" he asked, shaking the snow from his great shoulders. "He complained of the cold; and gave me the slip. Risky thing for a novice to do on a night like this—there's more snow to come down."

Mrs. Revelstone herself went to look for her brother. The Marquis and Jimmy were discussing the incident of the sheep when they heard her scream in alarm. Before they could reach the door, she burst into the room, wildly waving a sheet of note paper.

"Melita! Melita!" She gasped. "Where is the girl?"

The Marquis caught her as she fell back, and took the note paper from her trembling hand. He glanced at the writing, stared about him in a dazed, bewildered manner, then placed the fainting Mrs. Revelstone on a chair.

"Melita's gone," he said, in a voice that was tragically calm, and addressing

himself to Jimmy. "She's gone away with Compton."

The woman on the chair groaned loudly, and covered her face with her handkerchief.

"Gone!" Jimmy echoed. "And where do you think they've gone on a night like this?"

"They're catching the mail at Riverspoint, and going up to Calgary—so he writes."

"He must be mad," said Jimmy. "It's twenty miles to Riverspoint, and the trail is buried. Why! Melita was here about an hour ago."

"Schemer!" Mrs. Revelstone groaned.

"Be quiet," said the Marquis sternly. His cheeks were deathly pale, and his square chin was lowered to his chest.

Mrs. Revelstone crept across the floor, and clutched at his hand.

"Marcus," she wailed, "you will bring him back? You will not let him do this foolish thing. He is only a boy, and it would mean the end of his career."

"I'm thinking of Melita," he answered chillingly. "She is only a girl—a child."

"She attracted him two days ago, and I did my best to warn him against her."

The Marquis led her back to the chair, then moved toward the door. On the threshold he paused and looked back at Jimmy.

"Melita trails the north side of the creek when she goes to Bleak Point, doesn't she?" he asked.

Jimmy nodded affirmatively, and inquired the Marquis' intentions.

"I'm going to bring her back," he replied quietly.

Mrs. Revelstone sprang toward him.

"But, Marcus, dear, you will not bring her back here—you will not insult me by—"

"This is her home," said the Marquis.

Mrs. Revelstone shrank away from those deep blue eyes that were piercing her to the very soul.

"My God! I believe that—that you love her," she wailed.

He bowed his head.

"I do," he said, "although I never realized it till this minute."

"And my poor brother?"

"He shall catch the mail at Riverspoint," said the Marquis.

He flung open the door, and passed out. A few moments and the two in the sitting room saw a great white horse plunging across the snow, now glistening in its moon bath.

And Mrs. Revelstone, who had played her last card, turned to the silent Jimmy.

"Is there anything like a hotel in this hole of a place?" she asked.

"We don't call it a hotel," said Jimmy, "but, perhaps, it will meet your requirements."

"Can I have my luggage taken down there to-night?"

Her face was as white as the snow without, and her lips came together with a hard, metallic snap.

"You can," said Jimmy decisively.

She opened her lips—and hesitated. There is nothing that a society woman dreads so much as the ridicule of those on a lower plane.

"My brother has not done anything so foolish as to elope with the girl," she said. "We endeavored to place that construction upon it in order to bring Lord Wisbeach to his senses. Mr. Compton has merely taken the girl to a friend of ours in Calgary where she will be taught to conduct herself like a—like a civilized being. We cannot have Lord Wisbeach laughed out of society."

Jimmy coughed.

Less than a mile from Riverspoint, which lies to the north of and in a direct line from Star Ranch, the Marquis came upon the two whom he sought. It was snowing fast, making it difficult to distinguish her from the white mounds that lay all along the trail. She was keeping a vigil, for at her feet was a mound of snow, and beneath the snow Horatio Compton. The two horses were nowhere to be seen.

"Melita!" the Marquis cried, leaping from the saddle and throwing a wolf-skin around her shoulders.

"My lord!" said Melita, in a thin, tired voice.

He brushed the snow from Compton's face and started back with a low excla-

mation of horror. She nodded and smiled, pityingly.

"He complained of the cold," she said wearily, "and clutched at his heart. So! I knew that he was dead before he fell from the saddle. Old Jake died like that at Folly Ranch in the fall of five years ago."

The Marquis looked long and anxiously into her eyes for sign of the insanity that he feared; but he looked in vain.

"How long have you been sitting here, child?" he asked.

"Since the horses bolted, my lord," she replied, rising and stretching herself like one newly risen from sleep.

"And how long were you going to remain?"

"Until you came, my lord."

"How did you know that I should come?" he asked.

"I prayed," was the simple answer.

He left her standing there while he gave the body of Compton simple sepulture in the snow, erecting a pine bough above the spot that he and Ryneck might find it on the morrow. Then he went back to the girl.

"Why did you leave us, Melita?" he asked, and there was tender reproach in his voice.

She opened wide her eyes, and looked him fearlessly in the face.

"It was my lord's wish that Mr. Compton should take me to Calgary to his friends that I might not witness his departure from Star Ranch. I was in your way, my lord—in the way of your sentiment, so he said."

He wiped snow from his face, and looked back along the trail.

"You believed all that they told you, Melita, without appealing to me?"

"My lord would have been too generous had I made appeal to him," she replied. "He would not have gone to England had I asked him to remain."

"Why do you persist in addressing me by that title?" he asked.

She did not answer, only hung her head. He led her toward his horse, and pointed to the speck in the distance which represented Star Ranch.

"Melita," he said, in a voice that trembled a little despite his effort to remain calm. "If I go to England, it will be to say 'Good-by' to it, and, maybe, to bring my mother—our mother, Melita—to my kingdom—our kingdom, Melita. I was not born to live in the cities, nor did the gods desire that your life should be lived among those whose artificiality is a near approach to sin. If you and I lived in those cities a single month, we should wither and die. We

need free life, and we need free air. Listen! To-morrow Ryneck and I will divide the ranch, and I shall build you a throne on the edge of the prairie."

"Marquis!" she breathed in an ecstasy of joy.

"Come!" he said imperatively.

Stooping quickly, he gathered her in his strong arms, and set her on the great white horse. He leaped up behind her, and, with the light of a new triumph shining in his eyes, headed south.



THE SLANGUAGE OF LOVE

I HOLD slang in detestation;
'Tis the speech of desperation.
I abhor it. I despise it. Yes, I do!
And it seems a dreadful pity
That some people wise and witty
Interject it almost every word or two.

It is my profound conviction
There should be some strong restriction
In the statutes of the nation to restrain
These assassinations awful
Of a language good and lawful
That involve the loyal purist in such pain.

I've been many years a-fighting
'Gainst a slanguage so benighting
That it turns the tongue of Milton inside out,
And pretends by common usage
To transform a plain abuse
Into something that is free from taint or doubt.

Yet, when Phyllis to my pleading
Of a deep love giving heeding
Brought her cherry lips close up beside my ear,
And then whispered: "Yes! I getcha!
Do I love you? Well—ubetcha!"

'Twas the sweetest speech I'd heard for many a year.

JOHN KENDRICK BANGS.

THE WANE of ISOLDE.

By

Stanley



Olmsted

THE much-fêted singer, Adine Boro, settled herself for the winter in Berlin, and gave herself over to comparative idleness. An odd concert date here and there, the usual engagement for the classic Gewandhaus at Leipzig—these had drifted Madame Boro's way despite herself. But on the whole she was resolved to adhere to her general plan of taking a winter off. This plan she was now fulfilling with that lassitude which is apt to overtake the woman—or, indeed, the artist of either sex—who has seen fame rise to a zenith and remain at that ominous motionlessness which only profound optimism can regard as a growth.

Aside from the nearness to her son, Felix, there were various reasons why Madame Boro, though American, should choose Berlin for sanctuary. To begin with, she had learned there the A B C of her art singing dozens of rôles at Frischstadt, one of their tiny cities within a fifty-mile radius of the Prussian capital.

How long, long past now was all that! Fifteen years ago, Madame Boro, with Parisian and New York successes already to her credit, had been received in Berlin, natural summit of her ambitions, with those acclamations accorded an international "guest" who appears only in especial performances at raised prices. It had seemed very much like the shortest way home by the longest way round. She had, you perceive, girdled the earth in about four years,

where she might have remained in Germany and covered the fifty miles between Frischstadt and Berlin in ten. The time-saving detour had not lacked its regrets. It had, for instance, made of Madame Boro a cosmopolite, thus depriving her of anything save occasional glimpses of her son, who must remain with his father's family during his years of adolescence. Well, that, too, was over now. Felix was twenty-four, a painter by profession, and he lived in Berlin. The more Madame Boro saw of him, the more she marveled that she, an American woman by birth and education, could have borne a son so excessively German.

For Felix resembled his father to a degree which satirized his unusual tribute in the adoption of his mother's professional name. He effaced the years, seeming, indeed, less her own flesh and blood than a sort of reincarnation of poor Lieutenant Von Blummer, whom she had so mistakenly married, and who had so fortunately died while the boy was yet an infant in arms.

This marriage with an officer of the German garrison at Frischstadt had been the result of a touch of idealization in the young local prima donna, mingled with more than a touch of loneliness, the feeling that she needed a protector.

Too late she had learned that it meant her husband's resignation from the army, that he was of those who can never reconcile themselves to their own decisiveness in such a step. Supported

by his wife's modest salary, he had survived his sense of diminished caste by just three peevish and inexpressibly irritable years. During this time Madame Boro, between whiles of singing her Carmens and Undines, her more dramatic Sentas and Santuzzas, had done what she loyally could to keep alive the spark of self-pride, the ballast of essential and nearly extinguished vanity in the man.

And for three years following his death she had renounced the stage altogether, meaning to live but for her son with her husband's family, on the impoverished Von Blummer estate in northern Prussia. Then the call of duty had seemed to sound more loudly from the side of the world. The Von Blummers were poor. Their lands were mortgaged. Her son might grow up a pauper.

So she had fared forth again, and had sung. The mortgage had been lifted. The money for the education of Felix had been supplied in amounts liberal and continuous. Gratitude, in return, on the part of the Von Blummers had been neither looked for nor received. Their haughty disapproval of her course had solidified to open enmity when Felix, forgetting his sainted and self-sacrificing father, had adopted the name of Boro for signing canvases, and the town of Berlin for painting them. They regarded this as but a final demonstration of some spirit in his mother akin to vandalism. Adine Boro knew them no more—a circumstance she endured with equanimity.

Berlin is a comfortable city. For her winter's repose, the singer had chosen a pension not too far removed from her son's studio, yet not so near as to destroy her own feeling of independence. Felix, she believed, would show a proprietary tendency in her affairs with very slight encouragement. She dearly loved her son, and because she dearly loved him she wished to avoid any such strain upon her affections.

For an uninterrupted score of years now, or nearly, she had known but one master—her voice. The public? Per-

haps. But what was the public, when you looked into it, but the slave of the voice, like herself? Sometimes she felt as if she and the public were fenced in together in some great twilighted place, and forbidden to speak to each other save on distant terms dictated by the voice in question.

Yes, life had been lonely. Life was lonely yet. She had her Felix nowadays, of course. But Felix wore a terrible and most un-American beard, and painted buxom and semideformed Melisandes, Guineveres, or Isoldes, clad in portières or huge canvases. He called himself a "secessionist," and a report went out that his mother was his ideal model, which wounded Madame Boro's feelings very much. She was too tactful to say so to Felix, of course. But she was certain she had not grown so stout.

Dutiful son that he was, however, Felix presented himself at his mother's rooms each afternoon at tea time, the hour given over to her more intimate friends. Madame Boro poured tea for him day after day, not without a touch of embarrassment. She had grown to be such a spoiled caprice of a woman. And this black-bearded son of rectangular manners was in many respects such a stranger to her. The pity of it! He seemed somehow to expect her advice, her sage counsel. She shuddered at the incompetence she felt. Whenever for a moment they were alone together the burden of his refrain was matrimony. And that was the one subject concerning which her ideas had dwindled into utter chaos.

"Dear frau mamma," he would say, with that lisping burr which German as a mother tongue imparts to otherwise unimpeachable English, "dear frau mamma, do you think I should marry?"

"How should I know, Felix-chen? Are you, then, in love?"

"Dear frau mamma, it is not for love that one marries. A thousand pardons, but you are not rich, and I am even poorer, since I have but your allowance. I think yet that you should find me an American heiress already."

It always ended thus. The Ameri-

can heiress was for Felix an ultimate solution of the scheme of things. It began to get on Madame Boro's conscience, to say nothing of her nerves. She slept with it at night. She carried it with her on her morning strolls in the Thiergarten when she aired Planquette, her Japanese poodle from the Rue de Rivoli.

"I must find Felix an heiress, poor boy! Such acres of canvas! Such tons of paint to be constantly purchased! It's a terrible expense. Why doesn't he do them slimmer?"

Thus mused Madame Boro upon the portière-draped Méliandes and Guineveres and Isoldes. Planquette had delicately ambled into the frosty stubble at her right. The morning was early December, and the Thiergarten was a crisp panoramic tangle against a cut-steel sky.

"A slender heiress," added Madame Boro, in afterthought. "She must be slender. Felix must change his ideals. Mercy! He must have gotten them at a beer festival in Bavaria."

A solitary horseman rode galloping along the bridle path at the right. Madame Boro recognized the rider, and prayed her destiny that he had not seen her. The prayer went up too late. The Graf Von Eichenberg turned his horse on a plunging face-about, and galloped back with a tremendous clanking of spurs and scattering of pebbles.

"*Ach*, the high-gracious Madame Boro!" Already the graf had dismounted. "I have the honor. Your obedient servant I recommend myself." And more and more and more.

Would he never get through gushing? This particular one of her several suitors always drove Madame Boro to distraction.

"And what are you doing this morning?" inquired the graf, uprighting himself at last from his hand-kissing. His horse's rein lay carelessly about his left wrist.

"I air Planquette," returned Madame Boro.

"Delicious!" gurgled the graf, in an ecstasy of appreciation. "Brünnehilde relinquishes her war call to whistle for

her poodle! Delightful! The greatest of Isoldes grows almost human. Confess it—the greatest of Isoldes is lonely! Then why does she ever and always refuse our humble protection? Why will she never agree to become the Gräfin Von Eichenberg, with titles and estates and servants as a fitting background, a suitable ending to so brilliant a past? Why——"

"If Brünnehilde renounces her yodel and summons her poodle for companionship," neatly Madame Boro measured sarcastic syllables, "she still regrets to see the Graf Von Eichenberg losing his horse. Just see!"

"*Ach, Gott!*"

The graf sprang in pursuit. During his impassioned utterances, the bay filly he led had jerked her fine neck in an irritation not unlike Madame Boro's own.

"A fitting ending! A brilliant past!" Such stupidity! As if the name Adine Boro were not at its very noon-tide. But now she was avenged. Though the filly was still well in advance, the graf was already but a speck on the horizon. Shouting park watchmen had joined the pursuit. Two fat policemen attempted such assistance as they might render. Madame Boro sank upon a park bench, and laughed until her sides ached.

"That ought to cure him for a few days longer. Don't you think, Planquette?"

Planquette merely brushed the hem of Madame Boro's skirt in a languor of tolerance. He was, after all, a rather unresponsive companion.

Perhaps that was why a sudden voice at Madame Boro's elbow sounded so drawlingly sweet yet strong, so strange yet familiar, so well-nigh terrifyingly like something out of a dream of the long ago:

"Addy Burr—I can't be mistaken! This is Addy Burr. It must be Addy Burr!"

Madame Boro looked up. Of course, she could recognize any Western American voice among all the voices in the world. It hadn't the best of reputations as voices went. But Madame Boro

had once known specimens of it by heart—oh, such unnumbered æons ago.

"That was once my name," she replied, "though I'd even forgotten I could recall it. You are——"

"And you don't remember Sam Rogers?"

"Sam Rogers! You don't mean the Sam Rogers—my Sam Rogers?" The possessive slipped leash before Madame Boro could catch her breath.

"Just him, Addy! Who else? Look close. You'll see I ain't lyin', Addy. Gray hair—naturally. Yours'll soon be, too—or ought to be. My, my, but if it ain't good to run into you way off from home like this!"

"Away off from home!" How like a forgotten tongue that sounded. Madame Boro was "away off" from that home to which he alluded, by nearly thirty odd years. During that time she had neither looked upon this man's face nor, as far as she knew, heard his name.

"I'd 'a' known your laugh anywhere in Christendom," he was saying, "even if I could 'a' clean forgotten you—which I couldn't. You haven't changed at all—not a bit in the world."

"Really?" ventured Madame Boro, joy leaping from her eyes. "Am I not—honestly—just a little stouter? Do be candid, Sam. Am I not?"

Into Sam's honest blue irises glinted a quick shrewdness.

"Just the same, I tell you," he maintained. "We folks from Missouri don't change, you know. You've just got to *show us*. Ain't that right?"

"Oh, Sam, this is delightful—delightful! It is more than that. I can't put it into words. Now, tell me all about yourself—all, all. I don't want you to leave out a single thing."

"Wa-al, there ain't overmuch to tell," hesitated Sam. "You went off to Europe cool like, you'll remember, after our little tiff about my being no proper appreciator of music; the time you had your benefit in the town hall, and somebody told you I said you hollered."

"Such village gossips!" sighed Madame Boro.

"Since then I've stuck by the old town, and—ya-as, I reckon I've pros-

pered some. First I bought up the canning factories. Then I built our Rogers Buildin', a reg'ler New York skyscraper, right by the courthouse. I kept on doin' a few things here and there on the side, when they come my way. Merged the three trolley lines and the two phone companies, and made the four local newspapers into two—one mornin', one evenin'. My last deal was syndicat' the several breakfast-food and soap interests. Cleared a cool million on that alone—but somehow things has begun to stop interestin' me. Nowadays I just——"

"Did you hear hoofbeats?" anxiously interrupted Madame Boro. "I'm so afraid if we sit here any longer that terrible Graf Von Eichenberg will be back."

"You mean that old bald-headed feller that scampered after his horse as I came up? I surmised he was a-sayin' something important."

"It is plain that your own history is the history of Uponsonville, Missouri, for thirty years past," evaded Madame Boro. "Do come over to my pension and have déjeuner with me. I want to hear it all—not a word lost. But we must hurry—we must hurry."

True to Madame Boro's foreboding, the persistent graf rode a much chastened horse back to the starting point of his adventure, arriving just in time for a glimpse of the singer's back at the turn of the walk. Beside her lolled a giant of massive shoulders and thick, iron-gray hair, who blithely swung a slouch hat in his hand as he walked.

Further details of the Honorable Samuel Rogers' career proved equally interesting. Twenty-five years ago he had heard of Madame Boro's German marriage, and, relinquishing such hope as he still cherished, had married himself. One child—a daughter—had blessed the union. Her name was Elizabeth, and when it came to a show-down on culture he assured Madame Boro that Lizzie atoned for all his own deficiencies, being, indeed, a paragon. She was good-looking, too. Yes, she was slim; and she was with him now

on this trip, which he had indefinitely planned to extend around the world. He was, in fact, traveling under her supervision, this being her third journey to Europe. He had sent her over twice before with touring parties.

As for himself, he had earned the soubriquet "Honorable" representing his district twice in the national Congress, but he hadn't been able to afford keeping it up. Politics were expensive. They took up time. His wife? She had died twenty years ago, poor woman. He dwelt appreciatively on her housewifely qualities. Since her death Lizzie had been his comfort and solace.

"How I should love to meet her!" enthused Madame Boro.

"Oh, but you're going to," replied Samuel.

"How I should love to have her meet my son, Felix!"

"That can be arranged, too, very nicely. We'll have you all over to our hotel to dinner. Lizzie dotes on entertain' at dinner."

"How perfectly enchanting she must be!" Madame Boro was evincing a fervor like a confession of new faith.

"She's some winner, all right," vouched Samuel Rogers, her father. "But, then—you are, too—you are still Addy!"

Madame Boro was too moved to even bow acknowledgment, as she would ordinarily have done. Youth surged back upon her like a tide.

"Do you know, Addy," he went on, "I've known a long time how famous you'd got to be, and often longed to get in touch. But somehow I felt I mustn't. I'd first settled my hash, you see, tryin' to discourage you, and then made you mad calling it 'hollerin'." But I thought a heap of you, just the same. You knew that, I reckon, Addy."

"My tone production was very faulty in those days," condoned Madame Boro.

"I was just a dull country dub, you know," pleaded Samuel.

"You should hear me now," encouraged Madame Boro.

"Do you know, I'd kind-a like to. I'd kind-a like to see whether a man's

taste grows any. And, then, maybe you *have* improved some."

"I can never forget my home town, nor any of the old friends there," mused Madame Boro. "If it hadn't been for that wonderful benefit they gave me in the town hall—why, I could never have come abroad at all. I would never have been heard of at all!"

"That was the only way we could even up on our lack of appreciation, Addy."

"Oh, yes, I understand, believe me. And it was you, too, who added a cool four thousand to the fifteen hundred they actually took in—and then took pains I should think the town had donated it by subscription. Somebody informed on you years afterward. You'll recall I sent you my check for that amount my very first season in New York—eighteen years ago."

The man's kindly features were all at once set. Across his forehead passed a shadow as of long-forgotten pain.

"That was what hurt, Addy. You sent it back without a word, without a sign. My wife was dead, and I'd heard about you bein' widowed. But I couldn't come over to New York to hear you—not after you did that."

"So you took it that way—that way! You thought I meant to snub—" Madame Boro buried her face in her hands. "Ah, now I see—I see! And I had thought you would understand. We had parted in coolness. You had never written. What could I do but keep my silence until you should choose to break it? I knew the money was nothing to you. But I thought you would read in that little wordless check my appreciation, my gratitude, my summons."

The man stood towering above her, a pillar of reassuring strength.

"Well, anyhow, we've come out good friends for keeps, Addy," he said. His voice was now without sentiment, and she saw the good taste of drying her eyes. "How I do wish I might hear you sing!" he added thoughtfully. "In the grand op'ry, you know."

She brightened at the thought of it.

"You shall hear me," she said. "You shall hear my Isolde. The Graf Von

Eichenberg, he—he likes me very much, I think, and he has infinite power. He shall arrange an especial guest engagement for me right here in Berlin—and it shall be all for you—only, of course, we won't mention that to the graf."

"Fine!" The Honorable Samuel Rogers spoke it as one uttering a benediction.

"And I—do so want my Felix to be good friends with your Elizabeth. Here—this is his picture."

She held forth the silver frame from her writing desk in a peculiar uncertainty.

"I'll give you a tip on that, too," observed Samuel gravely, examining the photo. "Make him cut off that beard. Lizzie just can't abide 'em—not that sort, anyhow. Make him shave it clean to the skin."

Madame Boro thanked him gratefully, the intimate fact being that her own feelings about beards were not at entire variance with Lizzie's.

Announcements that the renowned Madame Boro was to sing her *Isolde* in Berlin aroused genuine interest in a city distinctly loyal to its old loves. The Graf Von Eichenberg, debonair suitor for the hand of Madame Boro, who at her request had brought it all about, arranged a supper party for the midnight following the performance. To Madame Boro, in whose honor the occasion would be, he submitted his list of guests. He called her attention to one of the names—Miss Elizabeth Rogers, reported to be an enormously wealthy heiress, of America.

"Where did you make her acquaintance?" cried Madame Boro, in astonishment.

"At the American ambassador's," replied the graf.

"Did you meet her father?"

"Has she got one?" returned the graf.

"He also must be one of you. See to it that he shares your opera box with my Felix and his daughter."

The graf bowed.

"Madame Boro's word is law. We

four will comfortably fill it. And the young lady is very beautiful. *Ach!* If I were but younger!"

"You are a most terrible old flirt," hissed Madame Boro.

The graf found the repartee piquant. He kissed Madame Boro's hand over it.

She thought she had left mere nerves behind her long ago, and substituted "temperament." Now she realized, with terrible vividness throughout her opening scene, she was not, after all, so young as she once was. The nerves had crept back to get their innings. Across the din of orchestration, *Isolde* called loudly for air. Beneath *Isolde's* golden crown and engulfed flaxen tresses, Madame Boro's head throbbed with the effort. Under *Isolde's* abysmal toga of scarlet, Madame Boro's heart beat alternate terror and determination.

It was, however, a determination which would yield no hostage, grant no quarter. No compromise could be considered. Rise to her old heights she must, though she perish in the effort. She must show an *Isolde* which baffled comparison with the *Isoldes* of to-day—with her own *Isolde* of fifteen years ago. All Berlin was there to hear her—but what mattered Berlin? Her own destiny was also nothing. What was she to the one living man who might stir the ashes of sentiment to an after-math? What but a mere memory—his good friend, nothing more?

It was Felix she must help. She had faced the grim truth. As a man, Felix utterly lacked magnetism. Whatever glamour he should bring to this wooing of an American heiress, daughter of a loyal but purely disinterested friend, must come from the great artist, his mother. If Felix was to win, it must be solely through her efforts. Only the proof positive of her own glory, of her undiminished power, could, as she believed, hypnotize Miss Rogers into even a remotely approachable condition.

The two children had met but once before to-night. But Madame Boro had kept her eyes open on that occasion. She had not lost Miss Rogers' intense, almost quivering interest in herself, her

amiably veiled indifference to the freshly shaven, hence ultimately self-conscious, son. Yes, that shaving had been a huge mistake. Madame Boro had felt it too late.

"How glorious! How glorious!" From Elizabeth Rogers, far back in the Graf Von Eichenberg's loge, came the tense exclamation. But in his sixty years of life the graf had seen many, many Isoldes. He had seen much better Isoldes than this from Madame Boro. He couldn't exactly echo the rapture. Truth to tell, the past half hour had done more to diminish the fascination Madame Boro held for him than could a half dozen years of that lady in her own sprightly personality. On the other hand, he found Miss Rogers' enthusiasm entrancing.

Behind the two, in the extreme rear of the loge, sat the newly beardless Felix, taciturn, sour, morose. At his right the Honorable Samuel Rogers watched the stage spectacle obviously with a huge pair of binoculars, rented in the foyer, on the recommendation of the old woman who kept them.

The graf and Miss Rogers joined the promenade outside in the interval following the first act, while the son of a great singer and the father of an American heiress maintained stiff upright postures in their red brocade seats, exchanging not three words between them until the music started once more, and further comment was out of order.

On the far-off stage the curtain rose again. Acetelyne moonlight flooded a scene of castle moat, turret, and garden with hissing emerald. From the castle parapet Isolde waved her signaling veil, and Tristan, the lover, plunged tumultuously upon the stage.

The man with the binoculars was catching the spirit. He felt himself trembling. In the shimmering green dusk the sound of violins, oboes, and horns was as a play of giant bubbles in some monstrous aquarium. The least practiced imagination may sometimes experience the oddest distortions. To Samuel Rogers this Tristan, in his silver armor, seemed like some huge,

mysterious fish with dimly glimmering scales. Wraithlike Isolde, with diaphanous draperies and the indistinct aura of golden tresses—this could not be Addy Burr!

"She's doing better," observed the graf to himself.

"Isn't she glorious—glorious?" Miss Rogers kept whispering it into his ear. Hers was the raptness of ecstasy.

She laid an unconscious finger tip against the graf's elbow. He felt the thrill of it. The girl was charming, rich, young. Could she but know it, Madame Boro was casting over her a spell which might make the young woman acquiescent to the lure of his title. And gräfin number three might just as well be a great heiress as a great singer.

As for the Honorable Samuel Rogers, he still sat clinging to his binoculars, straining with every nerve, moved and shaken to the very soul of him. About him rose and fell the music, as if in accusation, hurling at him the taunt of the great beauty his life had missed. He dropped the glasses at length. He mopped his brow. Through it all had run a sort of queer, foolish little heartache of which he was half ashamed. To think that for thirty years, more or less, poor little Addy Burr had had to work like that!

"And she's still got to do some hol-lerin'," he sighed, spellbound, to himself.

Following the tremendous ovation tendered her after the fearful strain of the opera's final scene, Madame Boro was assisted to her dressing room by her maid and one of the stage attendants. Though utterly exhausted, she knew she must renew herself completely for the supper party to come. From the matchmaking standpoint, the evening had but begun. Her Felix and Samuel's Elizabeth must be further hypnotized into a thorough start together by her own indomitable will. She must strike while the iron was hot.

But Felix was already in the dressing room, awaiting her. His pinched features reflected anger, bitterness, disappointment.

"Dismiss these people," he demanded, pointing a dramatic forefinger at the maid and the stage hand. "I would speak with you alone."

"Yes, Felix." Madame Boro withdrew herself from the support of the two, and the door closed behind them. "And what is wrong, Felix?"

"You have desired that I marry an ignorant woman, an American coquette," he began. "You have desired that I dishonor the name of my father."

"As you some time ago repudiated that name, if only professionally, I don't see—"

"*Ich!*" shrieked the son. "Say nothing to me like that! That is the voice that kill my father. That is the voice that have shame my noble family until they hate you. And now you have select me a girl for wife who flirts—flirts the long evening with a bald-headed man because he have the title. I tell you, I want not your American heiress. She—she is but a grisette! She is *ganz ordinaire!* I renounce her!"

"Felix!"

"For you I have renounce my noble family name. For you alone I would marry the money, though a long time now I love another. I love Fräulein Mitparka, the dancer. Her only I love, and yet would have me marry a grisette who knows not the passion—a coquette who knows but the cheap American desire for a title. I renounce her! I spit at her! And I am revenged that you bring me to so false position. You grow old. You can sing no more. You grow—yes, I will say it!—you grow fat and wheezy!"

Madame Boro knew her son—or, at least, she had known the father whose type he reproduced. She knew that inevitably as the hour passed he would repent his cruel words in sackcloth and ashes, that he spoke half insanely, and would beg her forgiveness on bended knees. The arguments passed whirling through her mind; yet—the hurt of it—the hurt of it! Somehow that would not down,

"Felix, son," she said, groping before her like a creature without light, "I may have been wrong. But I meant well. I did my best. But you are right. I am old. I am stout and ugly. I shall sing—no more. I—shall—sing—no—more."

The words were a monotone, and lost themselves as she sank in a heap on the floor. The son, already collapsed, broke into a hysteria of weeping.

Two months later Madame Boro, from a reclining chair on a Kurhaus veranda in the Harz, congratulated her faithful friend, Samuel Rogers, on the brilliant prospective marriage of his daughter with the Graf Von Eichenberg.

"I've just read the announcement in the Paris edition," she said. "I'm so glad for her—and you."

"Lizzie always did get what she wanted," nodded Samuel. "So, of course, when she wanted a title, she got that, too. It's Lizzie's way."

"And you—you have been so good, so kind these terrible weeks. But for you, dear friend, I should never have pulled through. I'm sure of that. Your loyalty, your endless kindness—they have kept me alive."

She held forth a languid hand in the spirit which seeks a comrade.

"You have had a tough time, and no mistake." Samuel looked at her appraisingly. "Let's see, you've only been sick about eight weeks, and yet—why, I reckon you must 'a' lost *forty pounds!*"

When in an utter abandon of happiness Madame Boro withdrew the hand so unsuspectingly offered there blazed on its fourth finger a cluster of diamonds, exceptional in size and brilliance.

"We can settle a good easy life annuity on Felix, you know," explained Sam, "and he can marry that dancer he's been lately confidin' to me about. Here he comes now, round the veranda. Let's break it to the poor kid and be happy—all three of us."



IF you ever have had important business enough, or assurance enough, to get by the office boy, you may have seen her, and if you have seen her—I venture to assume that you are the sort of person that occasionally looks about you—you doubtless remember her. For in the first place she was scandalously pretty, and in the second place she was scandalously dressed. Even the determined people who got by the office boy generally gurgled inarticulately before her, for the combination of her looks and her clothes was extremely disconcerting.

Her clothes, in two words, were most improper; they broke, to be sure, no ethical convention, they were neither flaring nor immodest, they were simply improper. They would have done well enough on a woman of forty who had an unfortunate face, but they were as unsuitable to her as a flannel nightcap would have been to Aphrodite. Her besetting sin was that she defied efficiency. Fortunately, she also believed in fate. If you are one of the unfortunates who have never seen her, it should not be hard for you to imagine how she looked on any given day, because she looked always religiously the same.

Picture her then as a very lovely butterfly just emerging from her shapeless drab cocoon. On second thoughts, you are not to picture her that way at all. You are to think of her as a lovely girl of twenty-three, who could have worn pink roses without fear of their rivalry,

whose primly coiled hair made other girls, hitherto trustful of peroxide, change their seats in the car that happened to take her home. Even if you read no farther I am going to call it spun gold. I don't care, it was, just that. I won't tell you what her eyes looked like, except that they were large and a very deep blue, and that she did not have light eyelashes.

For the rest, she was not very tall or very short. That is about all there is to say, because her sense of efficiency had made an impersonal bundle of her body. But fairies must, after all, be dead, or one of them in passing could never have resisted the temptation to wave an experimental wand, just for the pleasure of seeing how much nicer she would have looked than Cinderella did when she was properly appareled for the prince's ball.

Indeed, many unimaginative gentlemen have been observed waving their sticks at sight of her, but whether they insanely believed them wands or not, I do not know. She herself never noticed them. Outside of office routine there was only one gentleman she did notice, and that was because she had to. He was a persistently intrusive young man with the white-tiled butcher's shop on Third Avenue.

In appearance this young man was much like other butchers. His expression was kindly, as is in general paradoxically the case with gentlemen of his trade. His immaculate white apron was girded about a youthful waistline, and

covered a deep chest. His hair was dark, and he had the beautiful pink-and-white complexion common to butchers; which is clearer even than that of a motorman. It was a complexion a show girl might have envied, but he took little pride in it. If there was anything in his personal appearance which filled him with an unusual sense of satisfaction, it was the diminutive brown mustache, a shade or so lighter than his hair, which would have made him, save for his chest girth, rather Romeo-like.

As it was, I imagine he looked more like Will Scarlet, the herculean nephew of Robin Hood. In short, there were two other butcher shops in the same block, and he charged two cents more a pound than either of them, and got away with it.

All butchers are probably independent, but two cents additional the pound means potential wealth. O'Hara Kearny could well have afforded to stay single, but he had no intention of doing so. He might even have married a plumber's daughter, accustomed as she was to every luxury, reared tenderly like an exotic plant in a tub. But instead his heart had been given freely and absolutely to the thrifty, efficient young lady, who persisted in remaining office manager for Bain & Biddle, though why any girl should prefer being Miss Meissner to Mr. Bain to being Kitty to Mr. Kearny is almost beyond the omniscient power of reason.

Perhaps reason itself was at fault. Reason, as you have probably discovered, is a poor, inferior thing, necessary enough, like the brake in the automobile—but there are few of the new models which are all brake. Faith and love and suchlike unreasonable things are the motive powers of life, and sooner or later you must recognize them, if you are ever going to get anywhere. This is what Kitty Meissner had not yet discovered. I have said that her god was efficiency; O'Hara Kearny could have told you that she was an enthusiastic votary. He had begun life with the usual respect for common sense; by the time he had known Kitty three years he would have broken common sense's

neck, if he had met it concretely in the street. If common sense had traded at his store, he would have used false weights without a qualm—but common sense didn't; it went to the other two butcher shops.

Every evening, as soon as Kitty's father had gone out to see a man he had to see, and Kitty's mother had shut herself on the other side of the sitting-room door, and begun running hot water into the sink and rattling dishes, O'Hara would drop his ceremonial manner, which was much like his professional one, and move his chair toward Kitty.

"What's the sense of all this sense?" he would say.

He was allowed to move within certain well-defined limits. If his chair came nearer than four feet, Kitty would shift hers away before replying:

"Need we go into that again, Mr. Kearny?"

And then they would debate pleasantly for an hour, until Kitty's father came back from his business interview, wiping his mustache and ready for general domestic conversation.

For three years O'Hara had had to satisfy himself with such small comforts; for three years he had declined Mr. Meissner's offer of walking to the corner with him, had shaken Mrs. Meissner's ruddy hand, and had been allowed the tips of Kitty's fingers. He was becoming dissatisfied, or, rather, more dissatisfied.

They were taking a frugal Sunday afternoon excursion to the zoo, and he had found himself momentarily growing angry, and big with determination; neither musk ox nor buffalo stirred any interest in him, æsthetic or professional. He frowned at the elephant, and turned his back on the light gazelle. It was full spring, even the alien, caged birds were singing, the trees were lovely in fresh green, the roar of the city had been left behind them.

He had a new Norfolk suit and a London-made cane; the tie he wore was worth three pounds of filet mignon, and his hat the price of I know not how many Philadelphia squabs, and yet he kicked along in the dust by the side of

his ladylove in sullen discontent. A passing automobile threw a fine cloud of dust beneath their nostrils. O'Hara snorted.

"They're terrible, aren't they?" said Kitty sympathetically.

"Terrible when you're not in 'em," O'Hara assented. "Look here, Kitty, you and I might as well be riding in one as not. You can't go on forever being a business lady. You needn't shake your head; I know you can't. There was a young gink around to see me yesterday about a new delivery wagon, a fine and dandy thirty-horse-power car, all fixed up so you could have a delivery body on it week days, and a nice runabout body Sundays, prettiest little two-passenger car you ever saw. Think of the open country all around us, and the nice roads, and—and all sorts of places." He waved his hand expansively.

"Well, why didn't you get it?" said Kitty.

"Do you mean——" O'Hara began eagerly.

"No, of course I don't. I have my work to do, as I have told you a thousand times, but if you want to see the country, you can see it just as well by yourself."

O'Hara groaned.

"There you go again," he said. "What do I care about seeing the country? I want to show it to you. It isn't the country—it's you. I want you, and I need you, and by—by ginger, I'm going to have you."

Kitty laughed.

"Oh, no, you're not," she said. "I know what it's like to be married. I've seen what's happened to lots of girls with good jobs. I don't think they get much out of it."

"Well, what do you get out of it?" laughed O'Hara.

Kitty looked at him very seriously.

"Independence," she said, "and thirty bones a week."

O'Hara flushed angrily.

"You know very well you can have all the independence you want, and if you're so stuck on a business proposition, you can have the thirty a week

free and clear, too." This was not like him; he had never been rude before; but now he was carried away by his anger, and the full-blown beauty of his new cynicism. "You might even get a raise," he concluded.

Kitty looked up at him. She was thoroughly startled. She saw that he had gone white, but as she looked at him his face grew red and redder. She was startled, and wounded, and angry, and pleased. But as she said nothing, he began to blunder some sort of an apology, and she found she was only wounded and angry. She, too, became very red, and tears came into her eyes.

O'Hara threw out his hands helplessly. "Please, Kitty," he said, "please. You know I only meant—well, I meant that my wife should have an allowance with the best of them, and I'm getting sore at waiting, and just walking and sitting around, and making oodles of money, with nobody to spend it on but myself."

But Kitty refused to answer him. Still in silence, she turned and began walking in the general direction of the subway station. O'Hara followed her, apologizing and expostulating, until, finding entreaty of no avail, he too fell silent, and marched along mournfully beside her.

He could not talk to her, but at least he could watch her, and she was, he reflected, well worth watching. How different she was from every other woman, how trimly and erectly she walked, how beautiful the angry little face between the horrible hat and the horrible collar. He never looked at other girls very much, but now he looked at them that he might see her better. There was none of them, he concluded, who approached her in looks or spirit; there was none of them who was not more becomingly dressed.

Kitty had never struck him as pathetic. She did so now. She looked like flowering trees he had seen standing in front of the florist's, erect and graceful things, with a pink bud or so showing at the top, and all the rest of their beauty shrouded in a burlap bag.

In the subway they made the journey

in silence, although they hung from adjacent straps, and were wedged intimately together in the packed car. He was conscious that she was still angry, but a new optimism upheld him in silence. He felt that change was coming to them; he even vaguely planned to have a hand in the matter. He determined to treat Kitty in a new way.

He left her, therefore, in the outer bailey of her castle, in the narrow entry way between the speaking tubes and the labeled letter boxes; he simply shook her hand in silence, touched his irreplaceable hat, and was gone.

On the next evening, as you may have guessed, he did not call. I will also frankly admit that your knowledge of men and affairs of the heart is again undeniably correct—he did not call on the succeeding evening, either. And on Wednesday morning he shut himself into the little glass room that sensible butchers have built about their desks—that there may be some warm spot in the shop—and persuaded central to give him a number in Harlem. It was the number of an undertaker, but strange messengers are often pressed into the service of love.

Mr. Quilty was one of the most genial souls in the world, and as he had often done before, he readily agreed to leave the shop for a moment—the weather had been fine for days—and run in next door to call Mrs. Meissner to the phone; for it was understood that whenever O'Hara Kearny felt the need of telephoning in the daytime, he was to say what he had to say to Kitty's mother. Kitty was very sure of the impropriety of being called up at the office. O'Hara rather liked to talk to Mrs. Meissner. She was always proud of being summoned by Mr. Quilty, and, like most American women, she talked freely over the telephone.

Yes, indeed, she would tell Kitty; she was glad from the bottom of her heart that the poor child would have an outing. She laughingly confided her fear that there had been a quarrel, and assured O'Hara Kearny of her own sublime belief in his good common sense. Yes, she was sure of the time and the

place, and would have Kitty there if it was in a mother's power to do so; she would even do her best to have her properly bedecked, although God knew, as she did herself, that Kitty's dresses were an ugly, crazy lot.

I think it would have done your heart good, if you are a follower of the sterner æstheticism that takes pleasure in the sight of the nation's bulwarks in festive best, if you could have chanced into the big drug store in the heart of the theater district that Wednesday evening, and seen O'Hara overfoaming the soda-water fountain. You will think I am saying a good deal about his clothes, but they were very beautiful. He had not gone quite so far as evening dress, nor did he wear what is gruesomely known as a business suit. He was neither frivolous nor commonplace, but as if subconsciously aware of his position as a bulwark, he was dressed in that happy combination, with which you are no doubt familiar.

In short, his coat and his waistcoat were cut too low for business, and high enough to show his seriousness of purpose. He wore a black evening tie, and a jewel shone on his arching bosom. The watch at which he occasionally glanced was of massive gold, the rather formidable case was pleasantly relieved by a pattern of exquisitely chased forget-me-nots. As he glanced at it for the third time, he saw that it was seven o'clock, the time set for Kitty's arrival. Knowing Kitty, he looked at the door, and went forward to meet her as she came in.

She shook hands with him very nicely; by-gones were to be by-gones. It was at this point, gentle—I hope—reader, that he introduced her to the other young lady, a Miss Lavalley, who was as different from Kitty as could be. She was pretty, and this was their only physical similarity. For her eyes were black and her hair was black; she was quite tall, and she was gowned to perfection. Kitty might have expected her, but she did not; she had never even heard of her. Nevertheless, she carried the situation off fairly well.

O'Hara explained that the three of

them were to take supper together, and go to the theater afterward.

For Kitty it was an evening of mixed emotions. They ate at a big restaurant in the midst of a costly gayety. They had good seats at the play—a fashionable drama, as well as Kitty could remember. She was happy in seeing O'Hara again, and happy because she thought she understood the reason of Miss Lavalle. She did not take her too seriously. On the other hand, she was too good-looking not to cause Kitty some reflection. She had not even supposed O'Hara had such gorgeous friends. "Lavalle"—she supposed she must have been a frog eater, one of the mysterious Latin race; that is, the frivolous people on the other side of the world, whose lives, as every one knew, were given up to love, dress, and dueling.

Yet Kitty was fain to admit that Miss Lavalle seemed a quiet, respectable girl. Even her clothes, upon analysis, showed thought and taste and judgment, careful construction rather than prodigal outlay of material. There was really no fault to be found with her, except that she was "always watching." From the tail of her own pretty blue eyes Kitty had often discovered the lustrous black ones upon her. All the evening she felt she was being "sized up," until she weakly resented her own sensible best dress, and longed with a new humanity for spangles. After all, men were men, like children, apt to be pleased with trifles.

She slept uneasily that night, and the next day began to make mistakes in work, mistakes which, succeeding O'Haraless days and unphilosophically wakeful nights, multiplied unbelievably. The other girls in the office noticed it first, then the office boy awoke to it, and finally it even dawned on Mr. Biddle.

"Bain," he said one morning, "you and I are about to start on an arduous expedition."

"Eh, what's that?" the senior partner inquired absently from his desk.

"I said that before so very long we'll have to go treasure hunting."

"I'll trouble you to talk in plain English, Biddle. You know I'm busy."

"Well, then, from all signs, we're going to lose our treasure. Take it from me, at any moment now Miss Meissner is apt to walk in and tender her resignation. And what would poor Robin do then, poor thing? I don't know. We may weather it, but we may not. Personally, I had much rather lose you, Bain."

And Biddle thought his worst fears confirmed when one morning the office manager did not appear, but telephoned casually about ten o'clock that she was not feeling well, which, commented Mr. Biddle, who had taken her message himself, sounded amazingly like a lie, if you can go by voices over the telephone.

It was a lie. Kitty should have said upset, for that was the truth. At the time she telephoned she felt that the world had been turned upside down. For one thing, she had not slept a wink the night before; for another, she was torn by conscience. She had not laid eyes on O'Hara since the night of the theater party, and in spite of herself she found it upsetting. There was something comfortable about O'Hara; it was regrettable that he had grown to be a habit. And then perverse fate and a blundering expressman brought her the express package.

It had come at a psychological moment, just a little before the time when her father was accustomed to go out to see a man and her mother turned on the hot water. She had met the expressman angrily, because she realized that she had run halfway downstairs to meet him, and he was only an idiotic expressman. The package was a long one, and its outer wrappings were damp with rain—damp and partly torn. There was no address on it, and the expressman admitted sheepishly that he supposed it must have got skinned off somewhere in the wagon. But he was positive it was for her. She knew that she had made no purchases, and so was equally positive that it was not. Then the thought occurred to her that O'Hara might possibly have sent her some flowers. She asked the expressman to wait while she made sure.

She was out from the room in a mo-

ment, with the package bunglingly retied. She fairly shoved it again into the expressman's arms.

"No," she said, very coldly; "it is not for me."

"Who is it for, then?" asked the expressman.

"I don't know," she said. "Take it away. You can't leave it here."

She spoke to him much as she sometimes spoke to the office boy. It was no way to address a free-born Irish-American, a prince of the republic, with his union dues paid up.

"I can't, hey?" said the expressman, and he kicked the package delicately into one corner and took his departure.

"H'm!" said Mr. Meissner, who had been watching wordlessly. "There's a fellow I got to see, Kitty. I guess I'd better step out for a moment."

"From O'Hara?" asked Mrs. Meissner tactlessly.

"No," said Kitty grimly, "it isn't for me at all, and I wish you wouldn't be so nosy, mother."

Mrs. Meissner retreated in indignation to the joys of running hot water; and Kitty, picking the package up, set it out on the hall landing, and burst into tears.

"I wonder who it was meant for," she asked herself mournfully at last. Then she sat up and dried her eyes, reassuring desperately her habit of common sense. "If I'm going to be onto my job to-morrow," she reflected, "I had better be getting some sleep."

She sought her room in furtive silence, undressed hastily, omitting her usual neat custom of folding her sensible clothes, turned out the light, and got into bed.

There are plenty of haunted houses, but very few haunted Harlem flats, but before midnight Kitty realized that hers was specter-ridden. The thing on the landing waited aloud to her. She felt as heartlessly cruel as if she had left a baby out there in the cold. At the hour when ghosts walk, a lovely, little specter might have been seen by the rain-reflected light of the streets tiptoeing across the Meissner sitting room—a specter that shivered and sobbed, and

undid the door into the hall with an appropriate rattle of chains.

Once she had the package in her room she felt better. She lit her light, and searched it again for an address, and then, in a hypnotic sort of way, commenced to undo the loosely retied string. There it was at last, a shimmering, impalpable thing in the flickering gaslight, light fold lying on light fold, as if it had floated down from some celestial region into its cardboard case. Kitty touched it softly with one finger. Some foolish girl's wedding dress, a lovely burial shroud of individual liberty. Thank God, she herself was sensible and free! She supposed the thing ought to be unpacked, wedding dresses were not meant to stay folded. She tumbled a tweed jacket off its hook in the closet, and swathing the hanger in her silk muffler, she lifted the dress out of the box, and hung it up in safety. It was, she saw, embroidered in small pearls. She sat down on the edge of her bed, and foolishly contemplated it.

At six in the morning her mother knocked at the door.

"Don't come in!" cried Kitty, but her mother laughed, and turned the handle. In the open doorway she stood blinking.

"Well, what is it?" said Kitty, in soft defiance.

"For the land's sake!" said Mrs. Meissner. "Ain't you the sly one? To think that you wouldn't even tell your poor mother! Turn around, till I see the back of it."

"It isn't mine," said Kitty desperately.

Mrs. Meissner laughed.

"Oh, of course not," she said. "It's for some girl just your size, name and address unknown."

"But I tell you it isn't. I just unwrapped it to take a look at it, and I thought there would be no harm——"

"No harm, to be sure," said Mrs. Meissner, and kissed her.

A moment later she was using Mr. Quilty's telephone.

"O'Hara Kearny," she said, "what do you mean by not telling me?"

"Telling you what?" said O'Hara, far away in his glass booth.

"That Kitty had said yes," Mrs. Meissner replied promptly. "I found her just now trying on her wedding dress, so it's no use in your pretending."

"Her what?" said O'Hara.

"Her wedding dress, to be sure. When is the day? She won't tell me a thing."

"To-day," said O'Hara. "I will arrive shortly."

When he did arrive, he had to talk to Kitty for a long time through the door of her room; for, if the truth must be told, Kitty had found herself unable to unhook the dress again.

"Kitty," said O'Hara, "I have telephoned the invitations. His reverence and the guests will arrive presently. You had best open the door."

"I can't," said Kitty tearfully.

"I can," said O'Hara, and he did it.

Mrs. O'Hara Kearny was brushing her husband's best suit in the pleasant apartment over the Third Avenue butcher shop, a task which took all her attention; for when the outside was fair and spotless she found that there were cinders and confetti in the pockets. Like a good wife she turned them out. She felt all the domesticity of the newly returned bride. She was too happy even to wonder what poor girl had never

received her wedding dress. From an inside pocket she absently took a bundle of bills and letters, and as absently tossed them onto the bureau. What a lot of truck men did carry! She contemplated them musingly. One square, rakish envelope caught her eye, and she picked it up by one corner, and smiled at it in friendly fashion.

"Lucile Lavalle," she read. Who on earth could that be? Lavalle—Lavalle—she remembered, the girl O'Hara had almost made her jealous with. As coolly as she had opened Bain & Biddle's correspondence, she drew the paper from the envelope. What sort of letters did Miss Lavalle write, she tolerantly wondered. She was professionally used to reading all sorts of communications.

LUCILE LAVALLE

Robes et Manteaux

To one wedding dress, satin crêpe de chine, duchesse lace, pearl ornaments. No fitting \$150.00

This was Friday morning. Saturday noon, the Woman's Missionary Guild of the Church of Our Lady of Sorrows received a complete outfit of clothes suitable for any sensible young heathen about to go into business, who might chance to be thirty-six, twenty-two, thirty-eight.



THE HILLS OF HOPE

GREEN, green are the Hills of Hope,
One to another they lie,
Shouldering close in a crested slope
To face the rimming sky.

Gray, gray in the dewy dawn,
Shadow-dappled at noon,
Velvet dim when each bursting awn
Swings in the winds of June.

Love! Life! the June winds sigh,
To the flecking daisy foam;
Life! Love! true hearts reply—
For the Hills of Hope are home.

MARTHA McCULLOCH-WILLIAMS.

ED



F. BERKELEY SMITH

ED was that quiet, knowing smile of his which gave to his personality a certain subtle magnetism. When he spoke, his voice was pitched low, and what he said was terse and to the point. In his keen gray eyes, and about the corners of his clean-shaven under lip, there lurked the outward expression of his sense of humor, which was ever ready to keep the smile company. There was a calm steadiness about that slim, wiry body of his which late hours had not shaken, and which his early training as a champion feather-weight boxer was in a large measure responsible for. To the unobservant stranger, his smile was unfathomable. To me, it often expressed, clearer than words, all he was about to say.

Though Ed was still on the better side of thirty, he was so old in "life" that he rarely told a story, and nothing surprised him—nothing. He had a positive antipathy for mixed drinks, cigarettes, and the races. He, who had in his early youth been a game sport, had now become a philosopher. Moreover, there was not a type in Paris that stood before him whom he did not know as well as he did his ice chest, or the contents of the carefully wiped row of bottles back of him. He shook a cocktail to the freezing point slowly for his friends, so as not to crush the ice—a pet theory of his own; briskly for the stranger. When his active hands were dry, he had a habit of feeling if his

pearl pin was safe next to the crimson carnation flaming in the lapel of his spotless white duck working coat. Without him the Sans Souci Bar would have sunk like many other Parisian bars have sunk—to failure.

It was a brand-new bar, tucked away in a side street close to the Gare St. Lazare; a glittering bar in bird's-eye maple and brass, and its habitués used it daily before and after the races.

They were a worldly lot, well pickled in experience, who knew horses and women, poverty and temporary wealth, and that rare exhilaration which luck brings to the winner. French and Italian, English and American, rich sons from the Argentine Republic, well-to-do jockeys, and the reverse. Immaculately dressed paupers. Ex-trainers with sure tips and advice. Aviators, chauffeurs, stranded touts. Blasé cocottes, rouged, plumed, and unemotional. The spendthrift and the miser, and men who lived solely for the races, suntanned from days at Longchamps, at Maison Lafitte, Auteuil, and Tremblay. Many of these kept their racing glasses hung back of the bar, and their mackintoshes in a closet, the door of which opened between two brass mermaids provided with electric lights—a closet which stood close to the race ticker at the end of a short flight of stairs which led down to a small supper room—deserted and stale as a crypt in the daytime. Vibrant with ragtime and noisy with the laughter of women at night.

There were nights, too, when this supper room downstairs was choked to suffocation, and the twin electric fans whirled uselessly in the smoke.

There is something feverish in this atmosphere. It breeds a thirst. It is the forerunner of remorse.

At precisely ten minutes to three in the morning Ed would drop down the short flight of stairs, and quietly announce in two languages—American and French—that it was time to close. The honest cash register upstairs, which never lied, would then be ceremoniously disgorge of its daily prey by the proprietress, Madame Martinet—La Belle Martinet she was once called, and was still celebrated for her past beauty. One of the few women proprietresses of a Parisian bar whom her own bar and the races had not ruined.

When the contents of the cash register had been counted, and the brass chips of the waiters tallied with it to a sou, Ed would hang up his white duck coat in the closet between the mermaids, chuck the faded carnation among the squeezed lemons, get into his neatly brushed black sack coat, put on his derby hat, lift it once in passing to Madame Martinet, and walk out into the night air, of which he gratefully took a long, deep breath. Often I would wait for him, and we would stroll up to Montmartre together, to part at the Place Pigalle, for he lived beyond my studio.

Where? Well, I never asked him. All I knew was that he was married, and was the father of a little girl whom he adored.

The day Ace of Hearts won the Prix de Longchamps, the supper room downstairs was in a bedlam. Upstairs they were two deep at the bar. Ace of Hearts won by a miracle. She was not even rated as a "possible," yet the Paris Mutuel paid out to those who had taken a chance on her five hundred and eighty-six francs for ten! Among others, she had enriched Yvette De Bries, who had put a hundred francs on her. She had in the space of four seconds lifted Jacques Tontain, whose debts were com-

mon talk in the Sans Souci, to a realm of opulence that made Ed smile. He was reeling in riches, all due to this trump of a filly who woke up on the home stretch, and as if by some sudden inspiration shot ahead of the rest, and got there.

To-night as I entered the Sans Souci at a little before ten, the jockey who had ridden her stood at the extreme end of the bar, sipping an Apollinaris, surrounded by admiring parasites. Ed was working at top speed. He shot me a slow smile over two brandy fizzes he was straining, and the instant his hand was free shoved me a bottle of Scotch, labeled "Dew of Kilbrathe."

"Any good?" I questioned, not knowing the brand.

"Good as any of 'em," smiled Ed slowly. "They're all bad."

And I poured.

As I emptied the contents of a cold soda, Ed, with a brisk lifting of the eyebrows, and a slight jerk of his head to the left, drew my attention to the extreme end of the room.

"What's up?" I asked.

He elevated his left eyebrow, turned his head, and gazed beyond the bar to the end of the long, narrow room.

"See her?" said he. "The little blonde with the blue toque, and her back to you, at the corner table—alone."

"Know her?" I inquired, amused at his interest.

Ed shook his head.

"Wish I did," he added, half inaudibly.

He raised his eyes squarely to mine as he mechanically wiped the cocktail on the captive towel, and there was a look of gravity in them wholly unnew to me.

"Damn shame!" he muttered, lighting the third burner under the coffee heater.

"This ain't no place for her. She came in half an hour ago."

"Alone?"

Ed nodded in the affirmative as he rammed the neck of a bottle of vermouth into the cork extractor and jerked the lever.

Even from the distance which sepa-

rated us, I could see she was not French.

"English?" I ventured. "There's a new lot of dancers at the Moulin Rouge this week."

"American," declared Ed, as he dropped an olive into a dry Martini. "Sure she's American! She's no show girl, either. Damn shame!" he reiterated gloomily.

"*Deux stouts*," bawled a *garçon de café*. "*Et puis un sherry coblaire*."

"Bon!" muttered Ed, and wrenched open the door of the ice chest.

My curiosity was aroused. I left him, and, edging my way past the crowd at the bar, sat down at the vacant table back of her, and proceeded to study her discreetly from her head to her heels.

My first glance at her lithe, girlish figure told me she was little more than a child—barely seventeen. My eyes rested for a moment on the dainty blue toque of the best quality, beneath which gleamed the sheen of her fair blond hair, half hiding two pink shells of ears, and from the vestige I could catch of the pure contour of her girlish cheek I could see it was as fresh as a rose. I saw, too, that her perfectly plain tailor-made of blue serge fitted her to perfection; and finally my eyes rested upon two trim little heels, belonging to two unmistakably made-to-order low tan shoes, incasing two charming little feet.

And now I caught sight of a small white hand, its suede glove lying close beside it—a fair, dimpled hand, which from my limited angle of vision I could distinctly see tremble as it lifted a glass of beer.

Having sipped it, she put it down upon its felt disk very, very carefully, as if she was wholly unused to the operation; not once did she turn her head, though she kept every few minutes lifting it to glance at the wall clock hanging in front of her.

Ed might be mistaken, for it was more than evident to me she was waiting for some one. Still I did not move. One never knows in Paris. One thing I was thoroughly convinced of: She did not belong in the *Sans Souci*, or in

any place of its kind in existence. There was about this little girl an unmistakable atmosphere of refinement and innocence, incongruous as were her surroundings. I found myself making a mental search for her governess; then my curiosity again got the better of me, and I rose and crossed the room to a vacant table opposite for a match. Here I lighted a fresh cigarette, wheeled squarely around, faced her, and caught my breath.

A pair of deep violet eyes were gazing at me in a sort of dumb terror. I saw a rosebud mouth half open in awe, and a girlish face pale slightly, then flush in embarrassment. It was not until I was sure of my own voice that I moved toward her. I had not taken two strides before her whole attitude became so pitiable that my courage failed, and I again turned to the match safe, sat down with my back to her, and ordered a fresh whisky and soda.

It is not often a face escapes my memory; most writers of actualities have this memory for faces well developed. With me it happens to be the most strongly developed sense I possess, and in the matter of this child before me there was no possible doubt as to her identity, pitiful as was the fact of her presence—alone—at night in one of the gayest bars in Paris.

She came back to me now as clear as a flash. I remembered as clearly, too, the young man who was attentive to her on the return voyage from New York barely a month ago, when the big Dutch ship dropped anchor in the mist off Boulogne. It was she who discovered the lost rope ring under the life boat, it having missed its peg and rolled nearly to the scuppers. I recalled how she had handed it back to me with her girlish smile.

"Thank you so much," I remembered I had said.

"Oh, not at all!" she had replied, with a frank little laugh, and rejoined her mother and the youth, who went hatless on the boat deck, being fresh from college.

He was of that type whom mothers are apt to consider "as handsome as a

Greek god." At twenty-three he had grown to six feet in height, considered himself already blasé, was conscious of his knowledge of the world and his good looks, possessed a sound appetite, a letter of credit, a false baritone voice, and a heart eager for flirtation. Moreover, he was blond, and back of the laughter in his blue eyes there lurked jealousy and the Machiavelian egoism of youth.

It was all plain to me now. His victim sat behind me. It was the second day out that he met her; by the evening of the fourth he had grown serious and was seldom seen in the smoking room until after she had retired. His was one of those strenuous steamer devotions which only youth can survive. They were on deck together even before the bugle sounded for breakfast. They were invariably late for luncheon and dinner; and, the boat deck being closed to passengers by order of the cruel captain, they were forced to promenade after dinner with the rest below, in the full glare of the electric lights and the portholes of the *chambres de luxe*, at the door of one of which he left her regretfully at eleven and went to the smoking room, where he proceeded to reserve ahead before the closing hour as much whisky and soda as it was possible for him to consume.

As I sat turning over in my mind these undeniable memories, I recalled how in the express from Boulogne to Paris they had reserved a compartment for themselves—the mother, the daughter, the youth, and the Irish maid. I remembered, too, as I passed their compartment—glancing in. Both the mother and the maid were asleep in opposite corners, but the boy and the girl were talking earnestly, and she looked as if she never, never expected to see him again. I read the label posted on their compartment window:

Ashton—Reserved.

A moment later I stood by a half-open window in the corridor, smoking, and gazing out at the green farms of France slipping by, felt for a fresh cigarette, and found my last crumpled with

the passenger list, which I scanned for possibly the first time since sailing; close to the top of the list I read:

Mrs. Clinton E. Ashton
Miss Edna E. Ashton and maid

As for the boy, his name lay somewhere among the sixty odd others designated by a star to disembark at Boulogne. I recalled, too, running across them again at the customs in the Gare du Nord, when I saw the gray-haired mother graciously hold out her hand in good-by to the boy. It was the gentle, dignified good-by of a woman of culture and refinement. I remember, too, how the daughter, as their trunks were wheeled out to their omnibus, had drawn very close to him, murmured something, looked for an instant up into his eyes, then turned away as he lifted his hat, and was gone in the crowd.

By George! It was damnable! Just as Ed had said—alone in one of the most mondaine bars in Paris. Driven to it? Never! That was absurd—this child of luxury. A caprice? Possibly—that remained to be fathomed. Would he join her? Had she by some unaccountable circumstances gotten into the Sans Souci by mistake? I felt the blood creep to my ears in disgust, in indignation at the capless cad whom I was now more than certain in some way was at the bottom of the affair.

It was no business of mine, and yet I felt something had to be done. She belonged to my race, and was the daughter of a lady. I felt a sudden desire to rescue her bodily, to force her if possible to disclose the name of her hotel, to put her into a taxi, and deliver her safely into the care of her mother, the maid, some one. There must be somebody responsible for her, I thought. I looked into the mirrored wall before me. She was still there, flushed, and glancing nervously at the clock. Just then I felt a hand laid on my shoulder, turned, and looked up into Ed's calm eyes.

"The bunch has gone downstairs," said he.

"Sit down," said I. "I've got something to say to you. What'll you have?"

"Nothin'," said Ed, with a weary smile. "When I want a drink I don't get it here." And he drew up a chair at my elbow.

"You're dead right," I went on hotly. "It's a damn shame! It's worse than that. She's nothing but a child—the daughter of a lady."

"That's what I sized the kid up to be," interposed Ed, with a glance in the mirror.

"I've seen her before," I declared. "We crossed a month ago in the same steamer together." And I described the boy. "She recognized me, and I thought she would faint."

Ed leaned nearer.

"Has she come here before?"

"First time I ever seen her," he returned doggedly; "and I know 'em all."

Here I mentioned her name. If a rescue between us was to be accomplished, it was imperative that he should know it.

"Any one spoken to her before I came in?"

"I saw a couple of guys brace her, but she wouldn't talk. Seemed scared, just as you say."

I ventured a girlish caprice to see Paris as a solution.

Ed shook his head with a grim smile.

"Not on your life," he added, with conviction. "Looks like a case of elopement to me. It ain't the first time a kid has gone crazy and met him where he told her to. Go over and talk to her—you know her. Tell her this ain't no notice for her. I see," he muttered, noticing my hesitancy.

"You go," said I, after a moment's consideration—consideration for her, for so far I had been discreet enough not to let her know I had recognized her, and had noticed the quick relief in her eyes when I sat down and faced the mirror.

"It'll be easier for her, since you belong to the place."

"Sure I will. Come over and join us when I tip you the wink." And without another word, he wheeled in his chair, rose, and crossed straight to the table where she was sitting.

I saw her flush crimson as he bowed

"good evening," and seated himself in the chair opposite her. Gradually I saw him gain a sort of frightened confidence from her, for as I gazed now in the mirror I could see her innocent eyes meet his own under the spell of his quiet smile, and her lips move in short, nervous replies to what he was saying—saying it so low that I backed my chair within strained earshot.

Ed's color, too, had somewhat heightened. He was not used to talking to young ladies of her kind. I saw him lean forward, and as he did so she straightened in her chair and flushed again.

"I'm tellin' you this, and I'm a-tellin' it to you straight," I overheard him say.

"I didn't—mean that," she faltered. Her young lips closed as if in pain. "You see—oh, please let me explain! I just thought I'd—"

"I'm right, ain't I?" Ed continued gravely. "This ain't no place—you'll be a good deal unhappier if you git to comin' here."

"Oh, but I don't intend to!" she answered him, with a little gasp. "Really and truly I don't."

The shrill laughter of women and the twang of the piano came up from below as the door to the stairs sprang ajar. For some moments it blurred their conversation. Ed got up and closed the door.

"Well, now, then," I heard him say as he took his seat, "there must have been some reason."

"Why, no. Why do you ask?" She spoke rapidly, with forced lightness, her lips tightening nervously.

"Come, now, you'll tell me, won't you? Feel kinder responsible for you."

"But there *isn't* any reason—really there isn't. Mr.— Oh, dear, I don't even know your name!" And again the fair little cheek flushed.

"Barman," said Ed.

"Well, then, Mr. Barman—oh, dear me!—I hope you'll understand. I'm going to ask you a great favor. You'll understand, won't you? Oh, please, I want to be alone—I *must* be alone. You'll understand, won't you? Please!"

"Sure, I understand. So you're expecting some one?"

"Why, no!"

Ed smiled.

"You'll go now, won't you?" she pleaded. "Oh, please!"

She glanced at the clock, and her lips quivered.

"It's ten minutes fast," remarked Ed, without moving. "It's quarter to eleven. We don't close up until three."

At this he turned, tipped me the wink, and I rose to join them, still conscious of her utter misery at my presence.

"I'd like to make you acquainted with my friend here, Mr. Brown," said Ed politely, rising as I bowed.

Again our eyes met, she searching my own intently, her breath coming quick, while I drew up a vacant chair, feeling more like a brute than a stranger who had her welfare at heart.

"Why, why——" She checked herself. Then, with the frank nature of a child, blurted out: "Why, weren't you on the steamer?"

"Steamer!" I returned, in surprise. "What steamer? I'm afraid you are mistaken," I went on evenly.

Again a look of intense relief came into her dear violet eyes, which since ten o'clock had been fighting to keep back the tears.

"The last time I steamed was from Halifax to Liverpool, and then straight to Paris. Let me see; that was nearly six years ago. You see," I laughed, "I am getting to be an old Parisian. Have you been long in Paris?"

"Oh, a long, long while!" she replied nervously, with fresh terror in her young heart at our double presence.

"Please!" she pleaded, half aside, to Ed; and again glanced in agony at the clock.

"Take that beer away," commanded Ed to a passing waiter.

The waiter stopped, nodded in assent, and felt in the alpaca pocket of his waistcoat preliminary to making change.

She gave a little start.

"You must tell me how much—I—owe," she stammered, opening a tiny gold purse with a sapphire clasp.

"Nothin'," said Ed, with his quiet

smile as he stayed the waiter's arm. "You see, Ace of Hearts has won the Prix de Longchamps, and everything is free here to-night."

"I'm afraid I don't understand," she said faintly.

"Of course you don't," said Ed, with satisfaction; and the clock struck eleven.

The corners of her young lips were trembling. She clasped her small hands in her lap to keep them still. For a moment I feared she would break down.

"You see, Ace of Hearts has been mighty kind to a lot of folks to-day, kind of a benefactress, see?" Ed continued cheerfully. "Give 'em all a surprise, just like the good fairy. Yes, yes, regular wholesale generosity. So you see——"

Here the toe of my boot came sharply down upon his own, while my eyes followed the figure of a young man in a light traveling ulster, carrying a yellow valise, as he strode halfway down the bar, stopped, and glanced hurriedly about him.

Ed looked swiftly up.

"Sure?" murmured Ed, rapidly questioning me with his eyes.

"Dead certain," I muttered.

It was the boy.

He stood for a brief second searching the length of the room, the corner in which she sat with us being well hidden from his nervous gaze by a column and a jog.

"And you like Paris?" I ventured, forcing her attention as Ed rose to his feet.

"Oh, I think it just too cute for words!" she replied painfully, with an effort to smile.

The boy had reached the end of the bar.

Ed walked up to him and faced him, and I again strained my ears.

"Miss Ashton has been waiting for you since half past nine," he said coldly, with a grim smile.

The boy stared at him with his mouth open as I rose to my feet, Ed blocking his way, still out of her sight and hearing from where she sat, hidden in the corner back of the column.

At that instant a little girl in a blue

toque and a blue jacket fell sobbing across the table. Little girls' nerves have a certain limit of endurance, I imagine.

"Let me pass, I tell you!" cried the boy, in a sudden frenzy, dropping the valise, his fists clenched.

"Go slow, kid," replied Ed calmly.

Two waiters poked their heads above-stairs, shrugged their shoulders, and withdrew. They were used to scenes of jealousy in the *Sans Souci*.

"Let me by!" shouted the boy, livid with rage.

"Don't cry," I said to the sobbing little form. "It'll be all right. We'll see to that."

"Goin' to elope, was you, and you had the nerve to tell her to wait for you here—in a dive!" continued Ed doggedly, still blocking his way; and the way was narrow between the bar and the wall.

"Goin' to steal that little girl from her mother, was you? By God! You're a slick guy, you are! Now you're goin' to do as I say," concluded Ed slowly.

She had turned despite my efforts, caught sight of him, and sprang to her feet.

"Dick! Oh, Dick!" she sobbed hysterically to the adored one.

"Sit down," I intervened. "You must do as we say, Miss Ashton."

She looked at me in horror as I mentioned her name, caught her breath, and sank back in her chair helplessly in a fresh deluge of tears.

"You see, you must do as we say," I repeated gently.

"Oh, I will—I will!" she sobbed, her tear-stained face buried in her arms.

"Oh, if you want money you can have it," sneered the boy. "You've got us, I suppose," he growled, as he now caught sight of me, and recognized me from the steamer.

"I don't want your money," Ed replied calmly. "I want Miss Ashton's address *now*, do you hear? That's my price. Where does she live?"

"That's none of your business," grumbled the boy.

He was a whole head taller than Ed as he towered above him. He was,

however, wholly unconscious of Ed's past record in the ring. I saw, too, that he was no longer blind with rage. That he was trembling now with unstrung nerves born of fear.

"Address!" snapped Ed. "And if you ain't a-goin' to give it, I'll turn you both over to the police. Expensive game—abduction, kid."

There ensued a pause, during which neither spoke, the adored one gazing sullenly at the floor.

"Police or address," insisted Ed sharply. "You'd better git busy."

"Elysée Palace," faltered the adored one, and leaned gloomily against the bar.

"Is that straight, Miss Ashton?" asked Ed over his shoulder, but she did not hear. "Find out if that's straight—Elysée Palace," he called to me.

In response to my second demand, her half-audible "yes" convinced me, and I nodded to Ed.

"I want to take Miss Ashton home," pleaded the boy, glancing nervously at the clock.

"You take her home? Not on your life!" muttered Ed. "I'll take her home, all right—me and my friend here will take her home. Home—understand? Now, you git!"

Quick as a cat, he drove the adored one ahead of him down the long, deserted narrow room—straight down past the bar until he reached the entrance door, I following him with the valise. Then Ed gripped him by the collar, and out he went into the night, the valise after him—scared, vanquished, demoralized.

Ed's explanations to Madame Martinet were successful. She granted him leave to take home a friend of his who was ill.

Five minutes later a taxi auto with a very much frightened, penitent little girl within, seated between Mr. Barman and a certain "Mr. Brown," was speeding toward the Champs Elysées.

I felt like one of two detectives bringing home a strayed and nearly stolen child.

Fifteen minutes later we discovered that her mother was still at the Opéra,

and that Maggie, the Irish maid, was in semihysterics.

"May the Lord love ye!" she cried, wringing her hands, while Ed explained to her calmly the plain facts of the case—based happily on what we had mutually agreed to in the taxi—that neither Miss Ashton nor her friend, Miss Edith, were hurt; that it was purely the fault of the other's chauffeur, who swung directly in front of them as they were returning from the musical, and that to save them from the annoyance of appearing before the commissaire of police as witnesses I had convinced the policeman that I was happily none other than her cousin, and that we had first taken her friend, Miss Edith, home, and then Miss Ashton.

All of which Maggie swallowed with gratefulness.

The empire clock on the mantelpiece, in the center of a score of family photographs in silver frames, tinkled twelve.

I nudged Ed, fearing Mrs. Ashton's return.

The little girl wearily stretched out her hand. Ed grasped it lightly; so did I.

"Oh, thank you! Thank you, oh, so much!" she said faintly, with a forced little smile; and we closed the door of the salon gently behind us.

We descended in the elevator. At the ground floor we drew aside and lifted our hats to admit a lady in a gray opera cloak that matched her hair, over which glittered a plain fillet of diamonds.

It was not until we had gained the street that I made the mother's identity known to Ed.

He elevated his eyebrows.

"Close shave!" he murmured, with that calm smile of his, as we hailed a taxi.

Three Sundays ago I went to Auteuil. It was a brilliant meeting. In the second race Ace of Hearts, rated as a favorite, went down at the water jump. Next to me at the ten-franc window was the barrier separating the thousand-franc window. At this "*guichet*" stood

a tall young fellow in a faded yellow mackintosh the worse for wear, and I saw him pass in to the receiving official back of the wire screen four one-thousand-franc notes, which he placed on Longstretch to win.

It was the adored one.

He seemed pale, nervous, and haggard as the official stamped his four tickets, and so strenuously engrossed over his ridiculous "plunge" that he did not recognize me.

The gong sounded. The great sea of humanity filling the tribunes and the vast pelouse held their breath on tiptoe while the satin-skinned horses swept around.

"Haras! Haras!" shrilled thousands.

"Belle Marquise! Belle Marquise!" roared up from a thousand other throats.

Women grew frantic and faint; men chuckled or cursed.

Longstretch was third. He leaped to second. P. Jones, astride of him, in lavender and green, was using his whip.

"Longstretch! Longstretch! Longstretch!" welled up from the sea of humanity in a delirious roar.

Bah! The devil! Down he went, rolling, kicking, with a broken leg; and from beneath him crawled P. Jones, limping, in lavender and green.

I strolled to the buffet.

The adored one was leaning with his elbows on the bar, and his boyish face was as white as chalk.

It was after six when I left the race track at Auteuil this rare June evening. After watching the horses being put into the vans, I started to walk home through the Bois. The sun was still an hour high, and in the approaching twilight the air was soft and cool and fragrant with the scent of the acacia trees in bloom. I had gained a shaded alley, and turned down toward Armenonville, when I saw a crowd gathered ahead of me at the corner where the highway from the Porte Dauphine crosses the Avenue des Acacias.

I joined the silent group, and craned my neck over the shoulder of an agent

of police. On the dew-drenched grass lay a form in a worn yellow mackintosh. The face was turned to the right. The right hand and arm lay outstretched. Half a foot away from the outstretched hand I caught sight of a steel-blue revolver glinting in the lush grass, and from behind the right ear trickled and dripped a thin streak of blood that made the blade of grass beneath it nod.

I caught my breath. It was the boy. He was dead.

By seven I had reached the Sans

Souci, Ed greeting me with that usual slow smile of his. I leaned across the bar, grasped his hand, and hurriedly confided the facts in his ear.

"Plungin'?" he murmured gravely.

"I saw him put four thousand on Longstretch," I declared.

For a moment Ed was silent. His left eyebrow lifted in thought.

"There ain't no man livin' that kin beat that game," said he, gazing wistfully at the sink. "Good thing she didn't marry him." And he wiped his hands on the captive towel.



THE THRUSHES O' KILLMURRY

OH, did you ever hear them sweet, the thrushes o' Killmurry?

And did you ever meet them nodding from the wayside hedge?

'Tis there they drop their bit o' cheer and send black care a-scurry,

'Tis there they lift your tardy feet across the boggy sedge.

And while you're jauntily tripping, lad,

They're overhead a-skiping, lad,

And 'neath your nose a-dipping, lad,

Like winged leaves awhir.

They're winging o'er the marshy loam and piping in the heather,

They're calling down the haunting winds with memories that start;

And, oh, the twilight mingles its sweet song and theirs together,

And wafts it o'er the roving waves to lure a roving heart.

Oh, can't you hear it runeing, lad,

Like wistful fairies crooning, lad,

A trilling, throbbing tuning, lad,

That any heart would stir.

Oh, there's a little thrush o' mine a-waiting in Killmurry,

With cheeks like petals blushing and twin breasts as white as milk;

And 'tis the roguish eye o' her that sends my thoughts a-flurry,

And 'tis the flaming hair o' her that scorns the softest silk.

And, oh, I must be going, lad,

'Tis her lips I'd be knowing, lad,

So I'm a-homeward blowing, lad,

Into the arms o' her.

GORDON JOHNSTONE.



HE is crazy about you. You could have done anything you liked with him. *Mon Dieu*, the richest young man in New York! I believe that he would even have married you, though you were forty times a thief! And then we should never have had to steal again. And yet you have let him go! *Juste ciel*, you are mad! I have no patience with you. *Tu es imbécile, toi, tout à fait folle!*"

Eve Lansing turned wearily away from her stepmother's angry, vivid face. The older woman was pacing the floor of their tiny parlor, chattering incoherently in alternate French and English. The girl sat motionless in a shabby arm-chair, every line in her slim young body expressive of a tired hopelessness. She was very pale, and her big brown eyes looked darker than they were. Usually they were full of flecks of gold like Eau D'Antzig, but this afternoon the pupils, dilated by tension and fatigue, had swallowed all the color of the iris like pools of ink.

"I wish," she put in quietly, during an interval in the storm, "that I had never told you anything about it, Claire. I ought to have simply brought you back the pearls, and said nothing."

A little muscle in her cheek hardened curiously as she spoke. Her lips shut in a tight line. Claire's face, on the contrary, softened perceptibly, though not with any human tenderness. She thrust her hand into her dress, and

pulled out a shining string of pearls, on which she fixed her sharp, dark eyes with a glance that was almost caressing.

"The pearls!" she whispered. "Ah, but they are beautiful! I hate to give them up to Meyerssohn, even for the money which he promised us for smuggling them. They are worth—anything!"

"Well," said her stepdaughter, in an expressionless voice, "they ought to be worth something. A good deal first and last has been paid for them—my last shred of self-respect, for instance."

The other woman turned upon her, flaming once more.

"Self-respect!" she cried furiously. "What have you to do with self-respect?"

"What indeed?" said the girl, with a slight and unhappy smile.

Claire went ruthlessly on:

"One would think to hear you that you had never stolen before—you, the cleverest—what do you say, crook?—in New York! All your life you have stolen. You are a *voleuse* without a rival. You have cheated in London, and Berlin, and Paris. You are at the head of your trade. And you liked it! You hear me? You have loved it, even! You are a natural-born thief!"

"It was all that I knew how to do," said the girl, not as one defending herself, but as one stating a truth.

"Pouff!" The woman made a contemptuous gesture with the thin, nerv-

out hand that still grasped the pearl necklace. "Pouf! If you had wished to be honest do you think that you could not have learned how to do something else? *Non!* You listen to me, Eve, for it is truth that I speak. I have stolen because I love money, because I like clothes, and jewels, and traveling, and comfort; because I cannot live as I would if I live honestly. If I could have had all this without stealing, I would have been just as well pleased. I am naturally honest, because I am naturally a lover of peace and security. But you have stolen because it excited you, because you were more—how shall I say?—more *intriguée* by stealing and cheating than you could have been by any honest way of earning your living. You would have been a fine typewriting girl, *hein?*" She laughed scornfully. "You would have made a very contented little *ouvrière*, *n'est ce pas?* *Ma chère*, you liked better to win your way by your wits, as adventuresses have always done!"

"Claire, you are very cruel."

"Ah, *voyons*, cruel! I am truthful, that is all. You do not like truth; perhaps that is because, as I have said, you are naturally dishonest. I am dishonest because I have to be. But you have chosen it—chosen, *entends toi?* And now you look melancholy, and talk of your self-respect. Bah!"

"It is a trifle late," admitted Eve, looking straight in front of her.

The angry woman took two turns up and down the room, then stopped once more in front of the armchair where the girl was sitting.

"*Eh bien,*" she snapped; "if you did not care enough for the young man to marry him, why did not you keep him, at least," she shrugged, "on the string? He would be useful to us."

"Useful?"

"He is rich and influential, and he has rich and influential friends."

Eve shrunk.

"Claire!" she exclaimed. "Can't you understand one little, little bit? From the first I have cheated and tricked him. He has trusted me, believed in me; even"—she caught her breath—"even

cared for me, I think. And I have played with his trust over and over again. He was willing to marry me—me, a thief! And now," she pointed to the pearls, "I have stolen from him as a return for the highest compliment he could pay me. Can't you understand, Claire?"

"Stolen?" cried the Frenchwoman. "The pearls are ours! We brought them from Germany, we risked everything to smuggle them into the States. And he kept us from getting them till—we took our property back again. You need not call that stealing from him, little fool!"

"Wait, Claire. You won't keep to the facts. You and I smuggled the necklace in by dropping it into Mr. Madison's pocket without his knowledge. And because he had—had strength and nerve enough to keep it from us when he discovered it—for our own sakes, I believe—I went back and stole it from him. Stole it! It wasn't taking our own property, for we knew very well that the necklace was stolen goods."

Claire started to speak, but the girl hurried on, a sort of growing emotion sounding in her voice as her self-control was swept gradually away:

"I took them out of his desk. It was stealing. Oh, Claire, dear Claire, please be good to me now! I am very unhappy."

Claire Lansing stood looking down at her. Her face did not soften as it had when she gazed at the pearls, but a new expression dawned in her bright eyes, something vaguely sorry and concerned.

"*Est ce que c'est possible, ça?*" she murmured. "*Chère*, is it indeed possible that you really love this man?"

Eve made no move or sound, yet the woman was answered. She drew in her breath with a little clicking sound.

"*Ah, la, la!*" she said, shrugging her shoulders. "I suppose it had to come to you once. But I am sorry. To love—*c'est bien malheureux!*"

"Now you understand," said Eve, as though she had explained everything. "Now you see why I could not make use of him any more, why I have made

up my mind never to see him again. I could not let him marry a thief."

"Do you think," said Claire quietly, "that he will be willing to give you up?"

"I hope so."

"I believe you do hope so," said the other, staring a trifle. "You are a very odd child. *Alors, mon enfant*, you will put him out of your mind and heart, this M'sieur Guy Madison?"

"I will put him out of my—mind," said Eve Lansing.

Claire did not press her to finish the sentence.

The Frenchwoman had flung off her anger with characteristically mercurial ease.

"It grows late," she said, glancing at the clock. "If I am to take the pearls to Meyerssohn's at four I must make haste. Ah, the beautiful things!" She held the jewels up to catch the warm summer sunlight. "Look, Evette, are they not exquisite?"

"I do not like pearls," said Eve, without turning her head. "They mean tears."

"'Pearls for tears,' yes, that is the saying. But these beauties are to bring us only good luck, *ma mignonne*. Ah, *tiens!* You look so sad, so dull. Would you like to come with me to the Jew's?"

The girl shook her head. Her gold-brown eyes were more somber than ever. Claire shrugged her shoulders for the thirtieth time that afternoon, and raised her black brows with a flash of irritation, which passed, however, as quickly as it had come. She began to smooth her thick, ink-black hair with swift touches, and took a powder puff from the bag at her side to whiten the already intense pallor of her smooth, keen face. Her dress, plain but Parisian in every detail, required few of the little touches necessary for an American woman's clothes before going out. Every fold was in place, crisp, fresh, and seemingly newly finished. Claire Lansing—or Claire Desprès, as she was still often called—was never seen other than faultlessly turned out.

The little flat where the two women lived was the barest and simplest of

homes imaginable. It was, indeed, only a temporary perch. Their rather wayful wings were soon to bear them away to the mountains, and this little corner of New York was solely to afford them a base for operations during their midsummer stay in the city. Though both loved beautiful and luxurious surroundings, they never made any attempt to create any home atmosphere when they were "at work," which meant engaged in some more or less dishonest money-making transaction.

There was at this moment not a thing about the small parlor to suggest that they were anything except two women of moderate means and austere tastes, not a thing, except—the string of pearls, the most perfectly matched pearls ever smuggled successfully from a great house in Berlin into the town of Manhattan. The pearls shed a sort of glamour over the shabby little room, lying there on the table, with the sun flaming upon their iridescent loveliness. They somehow dignified the faded cloth into tapestry, and promoted the two quietly dressed women to figures of distinguished prominence. Into the hot air that blew in at the window was subtly distilled an essence of adventure. The modest door was the portal of romance. For rich gems men have died, and fought, and murdered, and for such women have done even more. They winked softly in the golden light as though in mockery of two weak human beings that were so strangely at their mercy.

And then it happened that Claire screamed once, a very faint, sharp scream, and Eve raised her eyes to see two men who stood facing her in the narrow doorway of the room.

Neither woman moved; neither of them made even an instinctive movement toward the string of pearls glinting on the table. They were old hands, and their nerves were in good order, especially under fire.

Claire turned slowly from the mirror. Eve did not even rise from her chair. It was the Frenchwoman who said:

"Pardon, messieurs, but have you not made a mistake?"

"Oh, I guess not," drawled the older, shorter, and heavier of the two men. Both had the powerful bodies and healthy, unimaginative faces of our metropolitan police. They looked much alike.

"There they are, Jimmy," said the younger officer, pointing a careless thumb at the necklace.

"I guess," said the first man, "that you'd better come along quietly, ladies. We've got the goods on you for fair."

"What is the charge?" asked Eve calmly, but she was deathly white.

"Smuggling, ma'am," said the officer cheerfully. "Say, Uncle Sam won't do a thing with them pearls! Come on, ladies, we've been trackin' you for days, an' the custom officers is gettin' peevish."

"But we were examined at the dock, and let pass by the customhouse inspectors," exclaimed Eve. "I don't see how they can—"

The officers both chuckled.

"Never too late to correct a mistake, ma'am," said one of them, "and if you want to know how or why they do anything, why I guess the pearls are the answer." He picked up the necklace in a big red fist, and smacked his lips. "Say, they're the goods, all right!" he remarked appreciatively.

Claire began to breathe quickly. Clearly she was controlling herself with difficulty, and Eve rose and went over to her.

"It's all right," she said to her, quietly and firmly. "I'll go down and see the people about it. I'm sure there's been a mistake."

Claire's eyes looked into hers agonizedly. Eve knew that she was thinking of the lost thousands which Meyerssohn the Jew had promised her.

"It's too bad, Claire," she added, under her breath, "but we must just make the best of it. I'm ready to go with you," she said to the officers, picking up her hat from the sofa.

The two men looked admiringly at her. She was very pretty and very self-possessed. The first qualification they regarded with masculine approval; the

second met their professional appreciation.

"Too bad, ma'am," said the younger of the two, in a sympathetic tone. His superior cocked his eye at him, and said laconically:

"Don't cry, Mat!"

Then the two policemen and Eve Lansing left the flat, and Claire collapsed in hysterics.

Eve had plied her dangerous trade of crooked dealing ever since she was a child, but she had never been under guard before. She had somehow always managed to escape such humiliation, so that the fascination and excitement of her calling had never been killed. While one is free, the iron of shame and remorse rarely enters deeply into the soul. It is hard to see the darker and uglier side of a thing which has hitherto gone blithely and successfully with us.

Now a sort of panic overcame Eve, and she recognized in it the terror of arrest which had always dogged her like a shadow, as it does the steps of all guilty people. She, Eve Lansing, the free lancer, the seeker of excitement, the daring girl adventuress, was caught! She was going with the policemen to answer horrible, mortifying questions.

She might even be sent to prison. Such things happened to smugglers now and then—even to smugglers of goods that were not stolen. People got four—five—six months! Oh, could such a horror be? *Pearls for tears!* Tears of blood, tears of shame, of despair!

It was her first hand-to-hand encounter with the law, and it terrified her. Even if she were not imprisoned, she would be "marked." Henceforth she would be branded as inexorably as though she was in the rogues' gallery. Worse, she herself would now have the fear of the hunted, common to all fleeing things. When she entered upon a new "game," she would no longer be able to carry it through in the old spirited, reckless, almost joyous manner. She would cringe at the footfall of the watchman, or study strange faces with the anxious, sidelong look that she had

noted with scorn in the eyes of less successful "crooks."

And there was another pain and shame intricately and subtly woven into the fabric of all this.

It would be in the papers, and Guy Madison would see it. Even if she gave a fictitious name, he would recognize the description of her and of the string of pearls. To him, too—to him, as well as the police and herself, she would be labeled as a "suspect"—a person liable to the questions and the surveillance of the police. And it would dig the gulf between them a fathom or so deeper. She knew now that that gulf, sincerely as she had insisted upon it, tortured her. Pearls for tears! Pearls for tears! Could any tears in life wash from her aching eyes the scorch and smart of this?

She started as the younger and softer-hearted policeman touched her arm.

"We're there, ma'am," he said gently.

She nodded, and set her mouth hard as she went up some stone steps.

In a hideous dream, she found herself facing the desk lieutenant, and answering abrupt questions. In the same sick haze she recognized Brunnig, the German detective, who had tracked Claire and herself from Berlin. She heard the officer saying things about "making an example," and "a good lesson to the crooks." The floor was rocking under her, but she somehow contrived to keep her head up and her eyes dry. Her lips felt stiff as she spoke, but she answered what she had to answer almost naturally. The men admired her involuntarily. She had undoubted nerve, they said to themselves, and an air of authority. Nevertheless, she was trapped; there was no getting away from that. She was nicely trapped for a fact!

And then there was a little unexpected stir, and a red-headed man with eyeglasses and a shrewd mouth was talking to the desk lieutenant in a low, hurried tone, and pulling a pocket folder from his pocket; the desk lieutenant, with a puzzled frown, was looking at the paper advanced for his inspection. It was a check.

The desk lieutenant was a large, scowling person, who felt the heat in his temper, as well as in his dripping, mountainous flesh.

"Confound you all, Mulligan," he growled, most unjustly. "This is a nice wild-goose chase we've been let in on! Who first sprung that line of talk about a smuggled necklace?"

"But we've got the necklace, sir," blurted Mulligan, aghast at the onslaught.

The lieutenant looked ready to tear his scant hair.

"And a pretty job, too!" he boomed. "You idiot! The necklace isn't liable to confiscation at all!"

"But the customshouse people—" began the dumfounded policeman.

His superior cut him off with a sort of snarl from the desk.

"The customshouse people, as usual, arrive at the point about the middle of next January. Whatever they do they do about six months too late. They now find that the necklace was not declared solely by an oversight. The duty is two thousand dollars, and they've got it. And, anyway, when there's the Madison money back of anything, *it goes*. D'ye see?" said the lieutenant laconically and to the point.

The officer saw.

Eve's head went round, till the hot, bare police station seesawed in the dusty bars of sunlight. What did it all mean? What were they talking about? Two thousand dollars duty already paid to the customs? Why, it was some dream—some fantastic vision of the night—or a mistake. She looked doubtfully from the desk lieutenant to the two policemen who had taken her to the station. Before she found voice enough to put a question, the lieutenant had turned to her abruptly.

"Very sorry for your annoyance, madam," he said in a brusque manner. "But if you ladies would declare things a trifle earlier it would save you some trouble, to say nothing of the scare!" he concluded grimly.

"I don't understand," began Eve tremulously.

Vaguely she was conscious of one of the policemen putting the cool pearls into her hand, and of the red-headed man again talking to the desk lieutenant in a strident, important tone.

"And of course Mr. Madison felt very sorry about the delay in declaring them," he was saying. "And as he was glad to pay the full duty and a fine, the customshouse has been willing to overlook the matter."

Eve started as though she felt a sudden electric current.

Mr. Madison! *Mr. Madison!* Then Guy had—

The red-haired man, evidently the bearer of an explanatory message from the customs department, went on:

"Mr. Madison hopes, sir, that there will be no trouble about Miss Lansing's keeping the pearls; they are his engagement present to her."

Eve went out into the hot August sunlight, shaking as though with cold. But her heart flamed in her breast. The pearls? She did not want them. An engagement present? She could not take one. But that Guy had done this for her, that he had anticipated her hour of need and laid his plans to save her from it, this shed a glory upon the whole world, the world that had looked so black an hour ago.

"Pearls for tears!" she whispered, with wet eyes. "Pearls for tears, my beloved! But tears for joy!"



A VAGABOND AT THE GATES

WHAT is this strife and worry all about,
This building up and tearing down of things?
I know a wood where birds flit in and out,
And the west wind sings.

What of the sobs and hate words that I hear,
This shouting and mad barter in the street?
I know a calm hill where the stars seem near
And the airs are sweet.

What of the power that passes in a breath,
This digging for the buried gates of Doom?
I know a vale where echoes laugh at Death,
And the wild flowers bloom.

What of this learning, all this wondrous lore,
This making kites for winds to break the string?
I know the fields where men have learned before
How the heart can sing.

Yet if I had not lived this strife and pain,
Nor shed hot tears, nor learned of hate at last,
I could not love so well the quiet plain
And the skies so vast.

Had I not learned how power soon grows old,
Nor gathered from the lore of every land,
I could not scorn the things of dross and gold
For a grain of sand.

GLENN WARD DREBACH.



The Society Reminiscences of FREDERICK TOWNSEND MARTIN

CHAPTER XI.

REMINISCENCES OF MONTE CARLO.

IT is sometimes difficult to understand the fascination of gamblers for the tables at Monte Carlo. Here it is frankly acknowledged that the odds are against the players—at trente et quarante to the extent of about one and a half per cent, and at roulette, on some of the chances, nearly three per cent. The gamblers, however, contend that while the bank is obliged to play, whether it is winning or losing, the player can play or stop according to whether Fortune is smiling or frowning upon him. This might more than counterbalance the percentage of the bank, but for the almost universal human weakness to try "just once more."

In the sixties, in addition to the bank at Monte Carlo, there were similar banks at Spa, Wiesbaden, Ems, Homburg, and Baden.

The year after the Paris Exhibition of sixty-seven, I remember hearing of four young men who determined to make a tour of all these gambling places. They made an agreement among themselves that if any one of them lost one hundred pounds all should stop play immediately, and move on to the next resort.

On the first night at Spa, one of their number, plunging rather recklessly, lost his hundred pounds. But, on the other hand, each of the other three had won—one of them winning about fifty pounds, another eighty pounds, and the other

nearly two hundred pounds. According to the agreement, they moved on the next day to Wiesbaden. Here Fortune favored them. They all won the first night—one of them as much as three thousand pounds. But on the second night one of their number, who on the first night had won over one hundred pounds, lost that, and a hundred pounds more besides. Then, according to agreement, for these young men had the strength of will to carry out their compact, they moved on to Homburg. Here on the first night, three of them lost their hundred pounds, and the third one gained five hundred pounds. Then they moved to Ems, which was unlucky for all four. Then to Baden, where two of them won about a hundred pounds each, and the other two lost their one hundred pounds on the first night.

Finally they went down to Monte Carlo. Here they played till the rooms closed on the first night. Three of them had won small sums of money, but the fourth, placing ten louis at a time on the transversal or six numbers, and guarding it by a five-franc piece on the zero, had won so much money that his friends had to help him to count it up when he got back to the hotel.

First the transversal on which he had placed his money would come up, when the bank would pay him a thousand-franc note, leaving him his stake of ten louis to go on with. Then perhaps he would move it to another transversal, and lose it. He might even lose a second one. But as long as he won *once*

out of every six times, he was not a loser on the whole. Curiously enough, his transversals kept coming up so often that he soon changed his stake to five hundred francs at a time, and eventually to a thousand francs—the maximum. When the bank declared: "*Les trois derniers coups pour la nuit*," he placed one thousand francs each time, and each time won. Counting up his winnings at the hotel later, he found he had won one hundred and eighty thousand francs, or more than thirty-six thousand dollars. The next day one of the number lost his one hundred pounds beyond what he had won the night before, and they all returned to London.

Here was a successful journey, leaving an aggregate gain for the party of over fifty thousand dollars; but I regret to say that each of the four, on subsequent occasions, paid visits to these gambling places, and lost the whole of his gains, and more besides.

When the tables were flourishing at Spa, Wiesbaden, Homburg, Ems, and Baden, all these watering places were scenes of great gayety and dissipation. Balls and concerts were frequently given, and the idle rich of all Europe flocked to these resorts for amusement. Now, since gambling has been stopped by the German government, they have all taken on a much more somber appearance. Those who go to them go for the waters; and the evenings, which used to be given over to gambling and gayety, are now devoted to quiet conversation and early retiring.

At Baden in the early sixties, the great gambler, Garcia, was playing his system. This was so successful that he is said to have retired eventually from his gambling at Wiesbaden, Homburg, and Baden with over a million and a half dollars. He lost the whole of his fortune, however, when he returned to Spain, playing the national game of monte. A few years later he died in great poverty at Madrid.

Some who watched him winning tried to follow his system. But, lacking the iron nerve of Garcia, who knew exactly when to play and when to stop, most of them lost large sums of money. A

friend told me that he had often seen Garcia enter the room at Baden. He would look around carelessly, and then, as if guided by some insignificant circumstance, such as seeing an old lady leaning over the table, or a man who apparently had lost all his fortune, would suddenly go up to one of the tables. If there was not a seat vacant, he would offer one of the players a thousand-franc note for his place.

Once, it is said, the Prince of Monaco himself, passing through the rooms, halted to glance at him and the piles of notes and gold in front of him. Garcia looked up.

"Ah," he said, with a smile, "you see, I shall soon win all your money!"

"You may win some of that which I have already won," replied the prince, with a shrug, "but the more you win from me, the greater the number of fools who will rush in to give me more."

At that time the aristocrats of Europe were to be seen playing at Baden-Baden. The then Prince of Wales, the Duke of Cambridge, and many other royalties amused themselves after dinner with the whirl of the roulette wheel. On one occasion an Englishman was overheard saying to a friend: "I can't remain here, you know, with all these disreputable people."

"Why!" his friend replied. "There are three English duchesses sitting at that one table! What do you mean?"

All gamblers are very superstitious. They will play on the number of the room they are given at the hotel, the age of an acquaintance that they may make casually in the train, or even the number of the hymn given out in church.

It is curious how the numbers at roulette will repeat themselves from one table to the other the whole length of the room. On one occasion an English gentleman and his wife had brought a motor car to be exhibited at the competition at Monte Carlo. The number given to him for his stand was eight, and his car took the first prize. After the exhibition, his wife remarked that she should like to go into the rooms, and try her fortune at the roulette table before dinner. He himself was unable to

accompany her, but a gentleman who was with them offered to escort her. Before they started her husband asked her particularly to play on number eight, that being the number with which his car had won the prize.

At the first roulette table the lady called: "*Cinq louis au quatre premier!*"

"No, no," the gentleman said. "Remember that your husband told you to play on number eight."

"Oh," replied the lady, "it is too late now, for the ball was already rolling." And it soon fell into number eight. They moved on to the next roulette table.

"Now," said the gentleman, "back number eight, as your husband wished."

"No," she said. "I should have backed it at the first table. It is no use now. I will back the last dozen." And she placed ten louis on the last dozen.

The ball spun round, and again fell into number eight. At the third table she still refused to back number eight, and it again came up. This was repeated on no less than six out of the ten tables in the room.

Many years ago one of the frequenters of Monte Carlo came regularly every year, but seldom remained more than three weeks. He evidently possessed a system, but what that system was no one knew; nor would he himself explain it. He had always left a heavy winner.

A friend of mine who made his acquaintance learned that he came from New York, where he was well known in society, and that he spent money freely, although no one had any idea of the source of his income. He was a bachelor, often visited London and Paris, and looked upon his visits to Monte Carlo purely as business trips. He confessed that he always won fifteen thousand dollars, and the moment that he had won this sum he quit play until the following year. This had been continued for ten or twelve years, when my friend met him.

He said that this would be the very last time he should ever come to Monte Carlo. My friend expressed his regret, as he had found his company very pleasant. The gentleman explained that an uncle of his had died since he had been

abroad, leaving him a large fortune, so that it would no longer be necessary for him to come to Monte Carlo to make money. My friend then suggested that as this was his last visit, he might perhaps give him some hints as to the system which he had played so successfully year after year. The American said he would be glad to, and wished my friend the same good fortune he himself had enjoyed.

"In the first place," he said, "I always play at the roulette tables. I make up my mind that if I lose ten louis I will stop playing, and remain away from the tables for at least three hours. If I win I go on till I have won a hundred louis. I then stop, and am equally absent from the table for three hours. Very few," he added, "would have the necessary will power to carry this out. I have followed this method without exception for the last twelve years. Now, as to my system: I go up to a table, and I say to myself: 'The last dozen will come up, or the first dozen will come up; or red, or black, or one of the transversals, as the case may be. But I place no money on the table. If it comes up I consider that that table is lucky for me, and I then go on playing; but the first time I lose I move on to the next table, and repeat my imaginary stake until I come to a table where it wins. Then I play again, as in the first instance. In twelve years,' he said, "I have only twice made the round of the ten roulette tables without my imaginary stake coming up. Sometimes I have lost my ten louis three or even four times consecutively, and after that has come a run of luck, and on two or three different occasions I have won my hundred pounds two or three times over. Once I won the amount of three thousand pounds, which I considered necessary for my yearly expenses, in three days; and only on one occasion has it taken me more than two weeks. Then I stayed here four weeks before I accomplished it. You are quite welcome to carry out my idea, and see whether it answers in your case."

My friend, however, was a rich man, and soon found it so irksome to stop

when he had lost ten louis, or to stop when he had won a hundred louis, that, after winning once or twice, he pursued his own game of placing his stakes however and wherever he fancied.

Once at Monte Carlo I saw one of the Russian grand dukes playing in a very princely style. He came into the rooms attended by five or six of his suite, and pushing his way up to one of the trente-et-quarante tables in rather an arrogant manner, as though he looked upon the other players as so much dirt, he placed the maximum—twelve thousand francs—on rouge. Then, leaving one of his followers to look after it, he proceeded to the next table, and repeated the process. When he had made the round of the six tables he returned to the first. There his money had been swept away. At the second one he found the same result, and also at the third. But at the fourth there had been a run of black, the color on which he had placed his money, and he was handed ten maximums, or one hundred and twenty thousand francs as his profit. At the other two he had also lost.

On his second round of the tables he replaced at each the maximum. This time his profits were enormous. In one case he had won three times, and in another seven. He went away after the third round with something like fifty or sixty thousand dollars in his pocket.

On another occasion a lady covered with jewels arrived at the roulette table, with two attendants bearing little bags of louis and notes. She seemed to know very little about the game, for she promptly covered most of the numbers with a stake, and even backed rouge and noir at the same time. However, Fortune favored her, and she had not been playing more than twenty minutes when the bank was broken, and they were obliged to send for more money.

I will give an instance which shows that good luck is of greater value than any possible "system." In 1867 there were roulette tables at Suez, to catch the officers and travelers on their way out to the Abyssinian War. Here one of my friends went into the room, and found they had four zeros, two black,

and two red, for only twenty-four numbers. It was therefore almost impossible to win, but the table was crowded with players, who seemed to enjoy the excitement of the game.

Presently a young naval officer entered, and, throwing some gold upon one of the numbers, won a large stake, and he continued to win in a most extraordinary way, until at the close of the evening he found himself with nearly a thousand pounds in his pocket. He had to leave the next day for the war, and this was the only instance I know of any one winning anything in those particular rooms.

At Monte Carlo there are always a number of *chevaliers d'industrie* about, ready to take advantage of the novice, or any one that appears likely to be an easy dupe. Upon one occasion an Englishman had been playing heavily, and after losing most of the money he had with him, left the room in order to go to his hotel and get a further supply. As he went out a foreigner appeared accidentally to brush against him, and, begging his pardon, said he hoped he had had good luck at the tables. The Englishman said that, on the contrary, he had lost his ready money, and was going back to his hotel for more.

The foreigner asked him to have a cup of coffee before doing so, and when seated at the table explained to him that he was looking out for some one who could share with him in a method that was absolutely certain of winning. On his offering to share in it if he approved, and on his promising not to divulge it if he would not join him, the stranger explained that he had made friends with one of the croupiers, who had been there for many years, and was extremely clever, who could arrange the cards so that black or red should come up according to his wish. He told the Englishman that of course it would not do for this coup to come off too often, otherwise it might attract the attention of the inspectors; but that he had arranged for the following night, when his croupier came on duty, that he should give him a signal when red was coming up, by taking out his handkerchief.

The Englishman swallowed the bait, and feeling that the tables had robbed him of a good deal of money, had no compunction about robbing them in return. He therefore agreed to meet his new acquaintance in the rooms at a certain table at eleven o'clock in the evening. They waited for about twenty minutes, when the friendly croupier appeared and came on duty. He went on dealing. First came up rouge, and then noir; then a run of five on black and three on red; and then the colors began to alternate backward and forward. Soon, however, the croupier took his handkerchief from his pocket. The Englishman, who had brought the twelve thousand francs with him, immediately placed them on red. Red came up. The stake was taken off, and, as had been arranged, was equally divided between him and his newly found acquaintance. An appointment was made for the next evening.

But on the following evening the Englishman could not find his friend. He remained, however, watching the table, and at the usual hour the friendly croupier appeared. The game proceeded, and after a short time the croupier took out his handkerchief. The Englishman immediately placed twelve thousand francs on red. But this time black came up, and the twelve thousand francs were swept away. Needless to say, he did not see his new-found friend again, for of course there was no truth in his having any arrangement with the croupier. Having already pocketed six thousand francs, the confidence man was content to wait until the Englishman had left Monte Carlo before looking out for another dupe.

On another occasion an Englishman, while sitting at the roulette table, noticed that the gentleman who was playing next to him wore a magnificent diamond ring. Now, he knew something about jewelry himself, and concluded that the ring must be worth at least five hundred pounds. He was very successful in his play, but the gentleman next to him was continually losing, until he had hardly anything left before him. He then turned to the Englishman, and

said: "I beg pardon, sir, but would you lend me some money upon this ring?" The Englishman, however, was very cautious, and replied that he could not do so without ascertaining its value from one of the jewelers outside. The gentleman said he was quite ready to go with him, and they left the rooms for one of the principal jewelers of Monte Carlo. The jeweler, after a short examination, said that the stone was worth at least eight hundred guineas, and he himself would be willing to lend five hundred upon it. The foreigner, however, said that he had plenty of money at his hotel, and was not in actual want of money at the time.

Some days passed, and the two met frequently in the rooms. The Englishman continued to win, and the foreigner some days won and some days lost. One day they agreed that they would play side by side at the roulette table. The Englishman was again fortunate, and he won some fifteen thousand francs. The foreigner, playing in a much smaller way, soon exhausted his small stock of money. He said that he must go back to the hotel for more, unless the Englishman would advance him something upon his ring. This the Englishman readily agreed to do. The foreigner offered to sell it to him for six hundred pounds. The Englishman, having heard the jeweler's valuation of eight hundred guineas, readily accepted. Soon afterward the foreigner, complaining that fortune continued to go against him, left the rooms, but the Englishman stayed on until the tables closed.

The next morning, in strolling past the jeweler's, the Englishman looked in, and, showing him the ring, said:

"You said that this was worth eight hundred guineas. I have given six hundred for it."

But the jeweler, on examining it, said:

"This is not the same ring I was shown before. This is paste, and worth but a hundred francs!"

The fact of it is that the foreigner had played the same trick upon a number of those who came to Monte Carlo. He would wear a valuable ring, and had

several imitations of it made in Paris paste, so that a casual observer could not tell the difference. On the first occasion he would wear the real diamond, but on the second occasion one of the paste imitations would take its place.

A friend of mine, who frequently visited at Monte Carlo, was one day wandering in the gardens, when he met an old clergyman with his three daughters. He found that they had come over from Nice to see Monte Carlo, but when he proposed to take them into the gambling rooms, the old clergyman absolutely declined. Later in the day, on explaining to him that he merely wanted his daughters to walk through the rooms, and see one of the most extraordinary sights in the world, he consented on condition that they were not asked to play.

On entering the rooms my friend said to the youngest one:

"Although you may not play yourselves, I should like to put a louis on for you. What is your age?"

She promptly replied: "Seventeen."

He immediately placed a louis on the number seventeen on the first roulette table they came to. The little ball fell into number seventeen, and he handed her thirty-five louis.

Walking on to the next table, he turned to the next daughter, and said:

"What is your age?" And she said: "Nineteen."

He placed a louis on the nineteen, with the same result, handing her thirty-five louis.

On coming to the next table he said to the third daughter:

"What is your age?"

And she said to him: "Twenty-three."

He placed a louis on the twenty-three, but twenty-six came up.

After making the tour of the rooms, they strolled through the grounds again. Walking a little ahead with the younger daughter, he said:

"If I were to tell this story in England, no one would believe me—that I had met you casually in the gardens, taken you into the rooms, put a louis on for your age, seventeen, and then that

of your sister, nineteen, and both the numbers had come up. This would be against anything we could calculate within the law of probabilities. But if your third sister's age had come up, they would have said I was a relative of Baron Munchausen."

But the younger daughter said:

"My sister's age *did* come up; for she is not twenty-three—she is twenty-six!"

Another friend of mine, who was passing some pleasant weeks at Monte Carlo, one day received a letter from a young man in London. The letter said:

I am in great difficulties. I must have one thousand pounds by next Monday to settle at Tattersall's. I do not know where to get it. But I have dreamed on three consecutive nights that I went to the rooms at Monte Carlo at twelve o'clock, and put the maximum on number thirty-two, and all the surrounding chances. It came up—I won my twelve hundred louis, and settled with my creditors. I write to you at once, because if you would do this for me, you can send me the money in time so that it will reach me before Monday.

It was now Tuesday, and his friend, having had some previous experience in dreams coming true, went at twelve o'clock to the first roulette table, and placed the maximum on number thirty-two and all the surrounding chances. The croupier spun the ball. It fell into thirty-two. He was handed over twelve hundred louis, which he promptly dispatched to his friend in London.

Sometimes luck will seem to change, according to the position in which you stand at the tables. I once went into a room, and stood by a lady who had been losing heavily. The moment I stood by her, however, her luck seemed to change, and she won in a most wonderful manner, whether she placed her money upon the numbers, or upon the dozens, or upon the even chances.

But after watching her for a short time, I was about to move away. She turned to me, and said:

"Please do not go. Your standing by me has brought me luck, and I sadly need it after all the losses I have made at the tables."

Although I did not know her, I stood by her for another quarter of an hour, during which time she won many thou-

sands of francs. I was then obliged to go, for some friends were waiting for me; but the next day she told me that the moment I left her luck changed, and she lost everything she had won while I had been with her.

But luck or system, I am convinced that there is only one sure way to win, and that is not to play at all. For "a pound saved is a pound gained."

CHAPTER XII.

DERBY DAY AND ASCOT.

In its universal popularity with every class to be found in the complex society of England, the Derby probably outweighs any other sporting event on the British calendar. Practically the whole social world is represented, from the royal family of Great Britain, and royal visitors from other countries, down through the peerage and the list of untitled notables. Leaders of society in America, France, Germany, every country, are there, as well as thousands and thousands of the bone and sinew of the British empire. To the less exalted Derby Day means a holiday in the country, a chance to see the nobility on parade, and mingle with the highest of the land. Since attending the Derby for the first time more than thirty-five years ago, I have often thought it was one of the most democratic events generally attended by the nobility, for any one going to the Derby knows that for the day he is in the hands of the crowd—is one of them, and that he is mingling with every phase of life.

My brother and I had been invited to attend the great classic with friends in London who had made all arrangements for our comfort. Happily for us, the day of the race broke fair and clear, with a brisk wind. We were to drive to Epsom, where a private omnibus, or drag, had been sent the day before to insure a good position from which to view the race.

We started about nine o'clock, a very merry party, and had a drive of about two miles before we got upon the main road to Epsom. We drove through

Hyde Park, past Grosvenor Gardens, and along the sides of the gardens of Buckingham Palace. Along the way householders had already commenced putting up seats and balconies from which they and their friends could view the return procession.

The stir and commotion on the road soon began to make us realize what a day of excitement we were to have, for, after passing Vauxhall Bridge, we got thoroughly into the thick of the stream of vehicles that filled the twenty-one miles of road from London to Epsom. The footpaths, too, were thronged for miles and miles, many of the pedestrians evidently having started before dawn. They were all good-natured, however, and passed remarks upon the occupants of the vehicles passing them. Then, too, the bandying of compliments between the occupants of carriages added to the animation of the scene, although this was nothing to what it was on the return. People were comparatively quiet on the outward trip, we were told, not as yet having partaken of any of the refreshments so amply provided by every one.

How many of these people must have been saving up their earnings for months past in order to take their share of this day's enjoyment I did not care to guess. I had no doubt that for a great many this outing constituted the one glimpse of fresh, green meadows, corn-fields, and farmyards that they saw in the whole length of the year.

Our carriage was in the middle line, and we could watch people in vehicles on either side of us. Never had I seen a greater variety of conveyances—dog-carts, wagonettes, hansoms, spring vans, pony chaises—hired vehicles, and borrowed ones—big and little, old and new—all jumbled in one democratic crush, and all hurrying on toward Epsom and the race course.

At last we cleared the town, and got well out into the hedge-lined country lanes, all fresh and green, with the trees beyond in full blossom, and the fields one mass of buttercups and daisies. The ladies were glad to use their blue veils, for the dust began to get very

thick with the passing of so many wheels.

All along the lanes and down the by-turnings carts were drawn up under the shade of the hedges and trees, their owners busily partaking of a preliminary meal. With the occupants of the other carriages we came in for a certain amount of good-natured chaff, and were also favored with occasional showers of not very good scent. The pea shooting and rougher joking did not commence till the evening.

After a drive of nearly four hours we reached the environs of Epsom, and there we fell in with a stream of people on foot on their way from the railway station to the course. Thousands and thousands go down by rail—those who are tired of the scene by road or those who cannot afford the expense of hiring a vehicle.

We arrived upon the course at half past one o'clock, just one hour and a half before the great race. We drove up behind the grand stand, where we left the carriage, and proceeded on foot in quest of our omnibus, and I shall never forget that jostling and squeezing. We absolutely had to fight our way through the crowd to get upon the course.

No sooner had we accomplished this than we espied our omnibus, with the groom standing on top, looking out for us. The vehicle looked a bit battered. We complimented the man upon the splendid position he had secured, and he told us he had arrived early the day before. He guarded the position all night, and in the surging of the crowds all the windows had been smashed.

As we clambered to our seats at the top of the vehicle, a never-to-be-forgotten sight greeted our eyes. The place was an ever-changing sea of faces—good, bad, and indifferent—and the voices merged into one composite voice like the roar of the sea.

We were near the winning post, and right opposite the royal grand stand and the jockey club grand stand. The betting ring was just to our left. The royal stand was not yet occupied, the princes and princesses not having arrived, but

the other stands were packed with spectators. Now and again when some particular object was to be seen, all the people would turn toward it, and the effect of the sun lighting up the faces all thus turned in one direction might be likened to that of a field of ripened grain suddenly illuminated by the passing of a cloud. Everywhere a solid mass of humanity, laughing, talking, and gesticulating—not a blade of grass visible, nothing to indicate the country outing for which these people had saved. The betting ring seemed to be the vortex of this human maelstrom—betters yelling odds and waving their hard-earned cash on high—fights every few minutes, rushes of police to extricate some unfortunate "welshe" from the hands of an incensed mob, and people struggling for their very lives to get across the course.

Then, too, there were the women fortune tellers, the negroes, the Italian singers, the French dancers, dwarfs, monstrosities, and beggars. All the world was represented there in some shape or form, throwing away their money in folly or reaping a harvest from the excited metropolitans.

Soon there was a tremendous shouting and waving of hats, followed by singing, and then I saw the Prince (the late King Edward VII.) and Princess of Wales, the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh, and the three married daughters of Queen Victoria, with their husbands, appear on the balcony of the royal stand. The Princess of Wales took her position in the center, just under the Prince of Wales' feathers, and received a perfect ovation. She was obliged to remain for many minutes standing, bowing and smiling to the cheering people. She looked very queenly, dressed in some pale no-color material, relieved with rich mulberry. She and the other princesses carried lovely bouquets. It had been seven years since any ladies of the royal family had honored the Derby with their presence, for it is essentially not a lady's day, but this year the visit was made in honor of the grand duchess, bride of the Duke of Edinburgh.

As I was just opposite the gorgeous

little balcony of scarlet and gold I could remark the appearance of the different notables. The grand duchess looked decidedly more plain than on the occasion of her triumphal entry to London. I liked the face of the Marquis of Lorne, husband of Princess Louise, though he did not look more than twenty years of age.

Soon, at the tap of a bell, mounted police commenced to clear the course. The people reluctantly fell back, and formed a thick wall on each side all round the track. Then the horses, mounted by jockeys, cantered out, and there was a fresh outburst of cheering.

In two sweepstakes, made up among our party, my brother and I drew the favorite, Galopin, so he was the object of our especial attention. Galopin, Cambello, Repentance colt, Claremont, Seymour, and others—all superb horses—trotted by, and as they passed one could feel the thrill of excitement running through the crowd.

After a while the horses were ridden into place, and a breathless silence fell over the great arena. After four false starts they were off, and from then on all was the wildest excitement. I can remember a deafening roar, and the mob beginning to surge this way and that. Our omnibus shook and swayed under the impact of the masses of struggling humanity, so that we were almost thrown to the ground.

Soon the horses appeared in the stretch, and began that last heartbreaking spurt which makes men and beasts forget all else. The cheering was deafening. For a few seconds the cries were confused, and then they all merged into a mighty roar for the favorite.

"Galopin wins!" "Galopin leads!" yelled the crowd, with one mighty voice, as the horses dashed across the line.

Then the people broke all restraint, and swarmed over the course to do homage to the brave Galopin. Proudly he stepped and arched his neck, quite conscious of the adulation and homage he was receiving from the crowd! He was led up to the royal stand, and after the princes and princesses had sufficiently admired him, he was trotted back to

the paddock. In this way ended the great Derby of 1875, the actual race occupying only a few minutes.

Then began my first experience with the historic return procession, and it was a sight never to be forgotten. The horseplay is traditional, and the rough element make it the excuse for considerable rowdyism, but in general the fun was harmless, if a little rough.

We left Epsom at six o'clock, and arrived in town at ten, during all of which time we traveled in crowds as dense as one finds in the heart of London. The pea shooting was continuous, and we, like all others in carriages, were under a constant fire.

The crush of vehicles returning to London was far greater than on the outward trip, for immediately the race is over every one starts back, while many go to the race early to avoid the outward-bound crowds. As we neared London the footpaths overflowed, and the pedestrians filled the roadway, rendering the progress of the great stream of vehicles almost impossible. The din was terrific, the surging of the crowd made one's head swim, and the cloud of dust kicked up by the thousands of horses and pedestrians made one choke and gasp, but it was all enjoyable nevertheless. Many of the rollickers wore hideous false faces, wax noses, or absurd false whiskers, while every one made the return procession the occasion for a carnival in which folly could have full swing.

Here would be a barrow filled with hucksters who had imbibed unwisely, roaring out songs at the tops of their voices, while there would be a dogcart with a quiet suburban family. Again would pass a crowd of rowdies manipulating their pea shooters with telling effect, and ever and anon a crested carriage with dignified coachman bearing homeward some member of the nobility with his friends.

We reached our journey's end at last, but the excitement was too much for me, and I sat until the small hours of the morning writing my impressions of the event.

Only a few years ago, after King Ed-

ward had come to the throne, I witnessed the Derby again, and it was a striking sight to see his majesty leading out his horse to the accompaniment of the cheers of his subjects, but these cheers were as nothing compared to the din raised when the royal colors brought home the winner of this most important race in all England.

After seeing the Derby, so popular with the masses, I had a great desire to see the contrast afforded by the fashionable Ascot, where the aristocracy of the land combined with the public to celebrate the greatest race of the month of June.

I was fortunate enough in numbering among my friends Colonel FitzGeorge, who kindly obtained for me from his father, the Duke of Cambridge, a ticket for the royal inclosure at Ascot, the most fashionable race of the year. This celebrated event is generally opened in semi-state, and the advantage of receiving an invitation to the royal inclosure will be apparent when it is mentioned that on the day of the race it presents the appearance of a great garden party, for the women seem to try and outdo each other in the choice of beautiful costumes.

That small inclosure was a veritable Vanity Fair. Indeed, I was impressed by the fact that all eyes were occupied in watching the variations of the social world, and that they themselves were so taken up with each other's lives, so much engaged in little flirtations and the gossip of the day, that very little attention was paid to the races.

I have been to Ascot a number of times since, but I shall never forget my first impression. I was fortunate in having most beautiful weather, which of course added much to the brilliancy of the scene. Shortly after my arrival in the inclosure I became aware of the approach of the royal procession by the cheering of the crowds.

The Earl of Coventry was then master of the buckhounds, and he did what he could to keep up the old traditions of form and ceremony on such occasions as

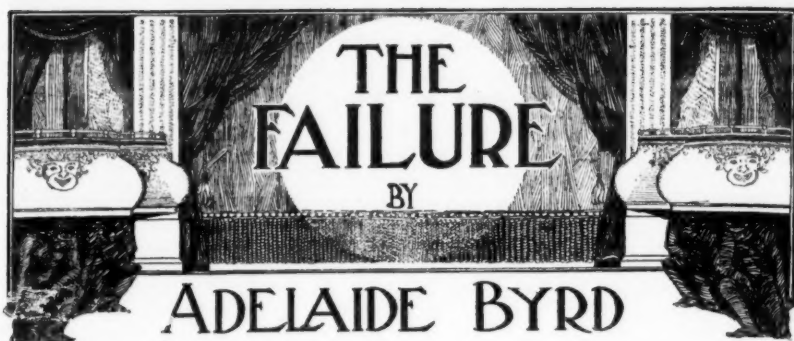
this. He rode immediately in advance of the royal carriage on a splendid horse, and with his green coat and regal insignia looked as though he had stepped out of an old sporting engraving, so quaint and dignified a figure did he present as he conducted the then Prince and Princess of Wales to the royal stand.

In those days the prince was as popular as when he reigned as Edward VII., for Queen Victoria had him take her place whenever possible, in order to relieve her of the many social requirements of her court. It was apparent that the prince's greatest desire was to make this great function pass off as a success and as a credit to the sporting world of England. It was apparent to me that the people outside the royal inclosure enjoyed the pomp of the glittering few within it as much as did the nobility themselves. In those days there was no such feeling of discontent as we now have, but rather the people looked up to the nobility much as they had been trained to do in the time of a cruder and less advanced civilization.

The race itself attracted little attention from those in the inclosure, but it no doubt aroused great enthusiasm from the grand stands.

I was one of the house party of Lord Wandsworth, and at dinner that evening what amused me more than anything else was that the conversation turned continually upon who was in the royal inclosure. All the gossip that one had heard going on there was discussed; and of the poor horse who had strained every nerve to win the race I heard only casual mention! The house parties are one of the features of Ascot week.

Many of the residents within driving distance move out and let their villas for the week to society people, thus reaping a rich harvest. These residents leave their servants behind them if desired; but many of the great families who come down from London bring their own retinues, for the continual round of dinners, dances, house parties, et cetera, requires service of the highest skill.



THE FAILURE

BY

ADELAIDE BYRD

THE curtain came down on the last act. The orchestra struck up a lively air, and people began to pour from the exits. There was a call of "strike," and there began the busy hustling about of the stage hands moving the scenery and furniture from the stage. I gathered up my hat, wrap, and other "props," and climbed dizzily to my dressing room. I had failed utterly. If there had been any doubt in my mind, the pitying glances of the members of the company and the stage hands would have banished it.

The star was furious. I didn't blame him. I'd ruined the big climax at the end of the third act. It was a tricky scene. He was absolutely dependent on the cues which I should have given him. I tried to utter the words that led up to his great dramatic scene, but I grew faint and my voice trailed off into nothing. I leaned heavily against a chair to keep from falling, gazing at him in a dazed, helpless sort of way, still trying to speak, while he paced madly about the stage. Then, realizing the hopelessness of the situation, he gave the signal to "ring down" the curtain.

I could feel the resentment in "the house" before the storm of applause broke. He was their idol, and they knew I had spoiled his big scene. They called him back again and again, even after he'd made a speech.

I don't know how I managed to get through my scene in the last act. I did,

somehow. I was glad it was short. And now it was over. I sank wearily into a chair, and gazed vacantly at the miserable face that looked out at me from the depths of my mirror. The hunted look that I'd seen in the faces of the older actresses, and wondered at, was there. I understood now what it meant—days of hunger, nights of sleeplessness, hours of soul-racking suspense, failure.

How happy I had been when the part was given to me. I knew I'd make a hit—every one knew it. The author, Mr. Lawrence, raved about me—said I had just the appealing, girlish simplicity it required. And the costumes—they were so pretty. I'd made them all myself, sewing before and after rehearsals, sometimes until dawn. But I didn't mind. Just a few more days, and there'd be rest and plenty—plenty of food; no more rolls and tea. There'd be steaks and chops—even candy. It made me feel strong to think of it.

And I'd have another room in a nicer neighborhood, and in a nicer house, where the landlady wasn't so—— But there, she'd been pretty decent—for her. She'd waited two weeks for the rent, on the strength of my engagement. I'd intended to ask the manager for an advance, so I could pay her to-morrow, but now——

The face in the mirror took on a look of despair—despair born of the ignominious failure. Failure! The word buzzed in my brain; it danced fantastically before my eyes; it jiggled in my

ears to the strains of ragtime the orchestra was still playing; an invisible hand seemed branding my very soul with it.

Something within me snapped. The calm despair gave way to a frenzied fit of weeping. I don't know how long it lasted. Suddenly the lights went out, and were flashed on again. The electrician and doorkeeper were becoming impatient. A voice called to me from below—it was Mr. Lawrence. I didn't answer. I knew what he wanted to say, but I couldn't face him. Hurriedly I took off my make-up, jammed the pretty dresses into my trunk, got into my street things, staggered downstairs, and out into the night.

A crowd of ruffians, mistaking my uncertain footsteps and red, tear-stained eyes for signs of drunkenness, offered to escort me home. Terrified, I rushed on. My room was just around the corner—I was glad of that. I opened the hall door, and leaned for a moment against the banister, before beginning the climb to the top floor. It seemed hours before I reached my dismal little hall room.

The dark spot on the ceiling, where the rain had leaked in, looked like an ominous cloud. A mouse, that had been nibbling on the remains of a roll I had left on the table, scampered away into a hole in the floor. I could see plainly by the reflection of the light across the way. And this was home! Then I remembered that it wouldn't be after tomorrow. The landlady wouldn't wait any longer. I smiled wanly as I thought of what might have been. And this was the end! To-morrow would find me—where?

Mechanically I picked up a box of matches, turned on the gas, and struck a light. A gust of wind from the open window blew it out. The odor of gas reached my nostrils. To-morrow—where? The box fell from my nerveless fingers. I stood staring before me, fascinated. Why not? There was no one to care. The little mother! I remembered her last words: "Be a good little girl. I'll be near, watching over you, and trying to help you." I had been

good—she must know—and tried, oh, so hard, to be brave; but I couldn't struggle any longer. The sounds of the midnight revel across the way reached my ears; a drunken song, the boisterous applause of men and women; men who wallowed in debauchery; women whose souls were dead—yet they prospered, while I—

Their mirth maddened me. I closed the window, locked the door, then fell on my knees and prayed: "God! Little mother! If it's wrong, forgive me—I can go no farther!"

A sound of thunder a million miles away. Voices from somewhere—far away at first, then nearer—the landlady's above the rest:

"Here's where the smell's comin' from. Fer Gawd's sake, put out that candle! Do you want to blow us up? Now, then, bust in the door!"

Crash! An earthquake surely. The landlady's voice again.

"The nerve of the little hussy—tryin' to kill herself, an' owin' me two weeks' rent! Now, ain't this a nice thing to happen in a respectable house? Send fer the ambulance, an' git her out of here quick. I'll be disgraced if any one finds this out."

They dragged me back to life somehow. I remembered a bright little blue-clad figure flitting about the spotless room, and a sunny face bending over mine, patting the pillows and making me "comfy." I couldn't help being grateful, so I took the medicine she gave me, and must have sunk into a heavy sleep. Dreams of days when the little mother smoothed away all the cares were flitting through my brain. Then suddenly I heard Mr. Lawrence's voice excitedly calling my name. I sat up; started to answer; then, in an instant, the misery all came back, and I realized that I'd been dreaming. But the voice—why was it still ringing in my ears? And what was it saying:

"I tell you I must see her!"

A disheveled figure came dashing into the room, rushed past the nurse's restraining hand, and dumped a pile of newspapers in my lap. Poor Mr. Law-

rence! The failure of his play had made him insane. I knew he'd staked everything on it. I tried to soothe him—tried to tell him how sorry I was, but he broke in breathlessly:

"Yes, yes! I know. I just came from your house. I tried to see you last night, but you'd gone. Poor child!"

His eyes filled with tears. I said it was good of him to feel sorry for me when I was the cause of his great misfortune, but, with a gesture of impatience, he plunged into the pile of newspapers, and began to read—notice after notice, each one more wonderful than the last. There were big headlines: "Play at the Princess Scores a Big Success! A Big Hit! New Actress Shares Honors with the Star!"

I snatched the paper from him. I could scarcely believe my eyes. Columns were devoted to the marvelous scenery, the excellent cast, the superb costuming, and then—the splendid climax at the end of the third act. Here was art.

This author, they said, knew the value of suggestion. He realized that something must be left to the imagination—the intelligence of his audience. No ranting through long, tiresome speeches;

just acting—and such acting! Of course, the star was superb; he was always superb. But who was the little artist who shared honors with him, and why had she so modestly kept in the background when the public showered such a storm of adulation upon her, in the hope that she would come before the curtain and accept her share of homage? The wonderful realism of her attempt to speak; the breaking and dying away of the voice; the exquisite pathos of the drooping little figure, with its wordless appeal, were so telling that the house was held spellbound. Great predictions were made for her future. I looked blankly at Mr. Lawrence, seeking some explanation.

"Good Lord, girl!" he cried. "Don't you see it? You're made! They're crazy about you! And the play—that climax—I knew it didn't ring true. I worked at it for months. And then, just by the merest accident—Don't you see it? That little bit of stage fright—just at the right moment—has made my play! The contrast between her weakness and his strength—it was wonderful—wonderful! Why, what's the matter?"

For I was sobbing—sobbing with happiness.



SONG OF HARVEST

WAVE with the tall-grain waving,

Sing with the singing air,

Lift with the light of morning

Into the heart of prayer,

Woman my soul hath mated,

Fused in the fires of spring.

Hear, through the wide world swelling,

Pæans of Harvesting!

Led by the word of morning,

Breathed o'er her pride of fields,

Autumn her gold is reaping,

Full earth her fruitage yields;

Come thou among my grain, Love,

Lit with a new dawn's fire!

Woman my being nameth,

Harvester of Desire!

CONSTANCE SKINNER.

A ROUGHNECK'S LUCKY NIGHT

B

WILLIAM SLAVENS McNUTT

THE wild, storm-tossed waters of Dixon's Entrance, raging furiously under the lash of a heavy storm, were fast merging into obscurity in the deepening of the long-lingering dusk of an April day in the southeastern Alaska country.

Along the seemingly unbroken, perpendicular cliffs of Duke's Island, the foaming lip of the maddened sea grew indistinguishable through the driving rain, and only the booming bellow of the goaded monster gave warning of the nearness of the great black fangs, towering grim and huge.

A few hundred yards from shore a small oblong blot showed dimly for a moment now and then on the top of a wave; this shadowy blur in the wild waste, intermittently outlined against the white of the foaming crests, was the bottom of a small sailing boat.

Two men, every instinct save the one to live dead from the daze of the howling delirium of wind and water, clung desperately to this wee, tossing fragment from their own element.

The smaller of the two men was an itinerant missionary; the other, Bill Heenan, a blond, barrel-bodied, bull-necked giant, with a chin that looked like the heel of a heavy dumb-bell forged into the broad, square-hung jaws that bulged beneath his small, neat ears. Small eyes—those aggressive, boring eyes of the man of much action and few

dreams, that seem to emit a repelling force, fending any glance that seeks to penetrate them, recording to the eyes about as much of the thought in the brain behind as would two bits of like-colored china—blazed from beneath the weather-puckered lids, two keen, narrow slits of bright electric blue. His nose was straight, high, and clean-cut. The face, from the chin to the eyebrows, might have been that of a great statesman, orator, man of affairs—but just above the bulging brows that spoke of much cunning and instinctive perception, the iron band of ignorance rimmed his head, and branded him for what he was—a roughneck!

Alaska knew him from Cape Nome to Ketchikan; knew him for prospector, hunter, trapper, and lifelong dupe of the gambling houses and dance halls.

He had been bringing the missionary to Ketchikan from one of the Indian villages to the south. Weaving his way through the myriad web of small arms and canals that go to make up the Inside Passage, he had lost sight of his landmarks in the rain, that was almost a fog in its density, and missing the entrance of the small strait between Revillo Gegido and Duke's Island, had sailed directly into the open sound.

It was some four hours since their boat had turned turtle. They were chilled from the long immersion in the icy water, bruised and bleeding from being hammered against the boat by

the waves that crashed over them as they rose to the top of each succeeding slope.

The missionary prayed wildly. Heenan shook his huge blond head free of the swelter of water that smothered him as each wave passed, to curse horribly. Both blasphemy and prayer were inaudible in the shriek of the battling elements.

As they neared the surf, the larger man's numbed consciousness awoke to full life. A fierce exaltation flamed in him at the prospect of the final grapple, and the beaten, tortured muscles swelled and set for the supreme shock.

There was no fear in him; only a terrible anger. His was the spirit of the absolute fighter. He expected nothing but death among the rocks in that boiling surf, but as long as a spark of life burned in him he would struggle, strike at the rocks with his naked fists, pass from life in a rage of fighting fury, and go to his God with a curse burning on his lips. But to the last he would fight, and exact a momentary thrill of savage joy even from the shock that brought him death.

With the dimly discernible wall of white, that was the high-flung spray against the cliffs, only a few yards from them, the missionary gave a scream, and, releasing his hold on the boat, struggled wildly for an instant in an insane attempt to swim back from the doom he had not the courage to face, and was swallowed up in the following wave.

The next moment the boat was grasped by the million hands of the surf, dragged under, then flung upward high in the air, and Heenan, wrenched from his hold, hurled far forward into the feathery spume.

He came to the surface, his senses reeling. A long, nasty gash just over one ear, from which the torn flesh hung in shreds, told how near a thing it had been. Dimly he realized that the water about him was comparatively calm, and he wondered at it dully as he swam mechanically on, expecting every instant to be lifted high and dashed against the face of the cliff. He was like a dream-

ing man just on the verge of waking, faintly conscious of the realities about him, but still under the influence of the dream, and unable to tell which is which. The roar of the surf seemed to come from some distance behind him; his outflung hand struck something solid, and an instant later he had scrambled free of the water, and felt the crunch of gravel under his feet.

"A crick!" he muttered dazedly. "Thrown square into the mouth of a crick. Heh! Heh! Heh!" he laughed foolishly. "Tha's funny! Thrown into a crick! Well, ain't that funny!"

His huge legs were bending under him, and he swayed slightly. He felt gingerly of the wound in his head.

"Heh! Heh! Mos' got me that time! Mos' got me sure! Heh! Heh! Heh! No gun, no grub, no matches, no boat, no nawthin'! Hell of a fix! Heh! Heh! A crick! Tha's funny!"

He reeled forward a few steps aimlessly, and stopped short with an exclamation of surprise. A tiny light flickered in the dark ahead of him. He rubbed his eyes, and stared hard, then straightened his shoulders and laughed recklessly.

"My lucky night!" he said. "My lucky night sure! Never reckoned on findin' a soul in a hundred mile."

He took a few tentative steps toward the light, feeling his way carefully in the intense dark, and then suddenly abandoning all caution he stepped out unhesitatingly.

"Goin' to play my luck," he muttered, with a chuckle. "I couldn't stumble over Mount McKinley with the cards runnin' my way like they are to-night!"

A few yards from the light, which came from the window of a cabin, he stopped. A burst of laughter and a snatch of song had come to his ears over the roar of the wind.

"Must be prospectors," he muttered. "I reckoned on a Siwash camp."

A thrill of warning passed over him; a thrill he well knew, and instinctively obeyed; and his shoulders swung loosely, drooping from his suddenly crouched body. His hands were held in front of

him, hooked, like a wrestler on guard, ready to grapple or fend.

Hunter, trapper, prospector, creature of the woods and mountains since early boyhood, he was accustomed to obey blindly instincts that wiser men either repudiate or attempt in vain to analyze. He had suddenly dropped flat in a narrow lane in Nome one winter night at the bidding of its warning tingle, and a bullet from the rifle of a one-time partner he had quarreled with whined above him as he fell. On the gangplank of an Alaska-bound ship in Vancouver the thrill had come, and he unhesitatingly backed ashore. The boat was never heard from after it cleared port.

Laugh at it! Scorn the something that guides the homing pigeon as it circles high over a foreign shore, and darts away—always in the right direction! Deny the thing we can't explain! But the thing exists, and strongest in men of the woods, men of little mental development who have lived long in the wild, and acquired a certain kinship with the animal kingdom born of propinquity and mode of life. The thing that perhaps guided our ancestors before definite, connected thought was achieved. The something made use of by animals and men when surrounded by that which they cannot comprehend, and must deal with.

He waited for a time for—he knew not what, and then, still moved by the prompting of the feeling that spoke in every nerve, he crept to the little window and peered in.

From where he stood he could see three men seated around a small table, playing cards by the light of several candles stuck in the necks of bottles.

At sight of the largest of the group—a gigantic fellow, with a mop of wavy, dead-black hair brushed back from his forehead, and a full, black beard that grew so high on his cheek bones that hardly any of the face was visible but the two small, narrow eyes and a nose that was almost large enough to be a deformity—he swore softly to himself.

"Touissant!" he said. "Blacky Touissant!"

The name was potent in southeastern

Alaska at that time. When men spoke together of him, and that was often, they lowered their voices, and looked over their shoulders frequently as they talked. Rumor concerning him was as rife as definite knowledge concerning him was scarce, and the mystery there was about the man and his doings led men to speak and think of him much as they would of some legendary character.

Occasionally he appeared in one of the little seaport or mining towns, and the news would spread through the camp quicksilverlike. Men flocked to him from everywhere, for all knew what it meant. A week, two, three weeks of the wildest orgies for every one, and all at Touissant's expense, for when Touissant appeared in a camp he always had money. Not gold dust, but real chechaeco money; and he always spent it, squandered it lavishly on all who would carouse with him for a certain time. Then suddenly he would be gone, no one ever knew when or where, to appear perhaps months later at some other port, his clothes bulging with money, prepared for another Gargantuan revel.

Where did the money come from? Men shrugged their shoulders, and forgot the puzzle in the intoxication of the liquor it bought. But there were vague rumors about it. A trapper had seen him disembarking from a sloop far up the Behm Canal, with three men in ordinary business attire. The men were never seen again, but shortly after Touissant appeared in Ketchikan to begin one of his orgies. A prospector on the Stickene River had heard shots, and later came on the bodies of two men dressed in boots and khakis that showed little wear. When he arrived in Fort Wrangle Touissant was there in the midst of a glorious spree.

As Heenan stood watching the three at the table, a man, who had hitherto been in a part of the cabin that was out of his range of vision, stepped up to Touissant, and touched him on the shoulder. He was an elderly, white-haired man, in a Norfolk jacket and knickerbockers. Touissant looked up at

him with a scowl, and rose reluctantly as he beckoned toward the door.

Heenan sank into waist-high growth of ferns, and waited. He heard the opening and closing of the door, and the voices of the two men came to him clearly.

"Mr. Gordon," the elder man said sharply, "I must protest against the actions of your men, and yourself as well. It is bad enough for my niece to be compelled to spend the night in this place under the best of circumstances, but your men are becoming intoxicated, Mr. Gordon. The situation is most unfortunate at best. Most unfortunate! I find it difficult to excuse your action, Mr. Gordon, in bringing——"

"What d'ye want to kick at me for?" the deep voice of Touissant interrupted. "I couldn't help it 'cause we had to run in here account o' the storm gittin' worse. Ye was anxious enough to come across an' have a look at the mine. If anybody's got a right to roar it's me. The bargain was, you was to bring the money with ye, an' ye didn't do it. Far's the girl goes, ye had no business to bring her along, nohow."

"Your man said the place we were going to was just across the channel, not two hours' run, and instead of that we——"

"Well, what d'ye think? Think I was goin' to give ye a map showin' ye the way to it?"

"I haven't seen any indications of a mine yet, and I'm not at all anxious to," the gray-haired man said spiritedly. "I came out chiefly for a sort of lark, anyway. I understood from your man that it would be simply a pleasant few hours' sail there and back, and I thought the trip would prove interesting at least."

There was a deep-throated chuckle in the dark.

"Ain't it?" said Touissant.

"It has been thoroughly disgusting and uncomfortable! I didn't take your man's representations seriously. I know something of the efforts made to sell worthless mines to tourists passing through the country. I am only sorry that I was honorable enough to respect my promise to him to say nothing to

any one of where we were going, or whom we were going with."

"Much good that would o' done ye!" Touissant scoffed. "Ye intended goin' across the channel a piece, an' this is the other side o' the island. Ye call me Gordon, but they ain't nobody in Ketchikan ever heard o' anybody by that name. Ye wouldn't o' told much if ye'd told all ye knew!"

"I don't like your manner, Mr. Gordon, or whatever your name may be!" the elderly man said sharply.

"Some don't," Touissant answered. "Look here, you!" he went on, after a moment. "I make my livin' out o' damn fools, an' I thought I knowed the breed more or less, but you—— Say, just let me recite you a few facts you don't seem to be up on. You're a stranger in this man's land, an' you come out with me to look at a mine without ever tellin' any o' the rest o' your outfit where ye was goin' to. Ye got a nice little pearl-handled gun along with ye, an' I happen' to drop it overboard when ye give it to me to look at. Now, ye ain't got no gun, an' you're five hours' good sailin' from town, plumb alone with me an' my bunch, on an' island that they ain't nobody lives on, nor nobody ever comes to. They ain't no way o' gittin' back except by boat, an' my boat's the only one they is. You couldn't never find your way back alone in it, if I was to make ye a present of it, which I ain't goin' to. They ain't no way o' your gittin' back without me, an' ye don't even know who I am nor what I am. It strikes me that if my legs fit your pants, an' I needed a jasper as bad as you need me, I'd do a heap o' thinkin' about whether he liked my manner or not."

"That sounds somewhat like a threat," the other answered. He laughed lightly. "Nonsense, my good fellow! If robbery were your motive, your trouble has been wasted, because neither my niece nor myself have anything with us of any real value. Of course, the situation is damned uncomfortable; being obliged to spend the night here without any accommodations whatsoever, and in the company of——"

Come now! See that your men stop their drinking, and conduct themselves in a proper manner, and make things as pleasant as possible for my niece for the night, and I'll pay you well for your trouble when we get back to town tomorrow. I'll reward you with anything in reason, but, my dear man, don't imagine that this absurd attempt at braggadocio on your part frightens me in the least. It's really amusing, you know!"

"Comin' from a man o' sense," Touissant said slowly, "I'd call that the gamest, nerviest bit o' talk I ever heard a walloper git rid of! Comin' from you — Say, you ain't right human, are ye? You're one o' them that's lived all your life, with a policeman watchin' ye, an' men paid to take ye wherever ye wanted to go, an' take plumb good care of ye while ye was goin'! You're one o' them that's been fed an' handled with care, just about the same they'd look out for a blattin' idiot, an' ye got about as much real man sense! You say ye ain't got nothin' o' any value with ye. There's them would think that niece o' yours was worth takin' a right long chance for!"

"You—you impertinent scoundrel, you!" the other exploded. "Do you mean to suggest that you——"

"As I remarked before," Touissant interrupted, "if I needed anybody as bad as you need me, I'd be almighty careful o' my manners, which you ain't! Now, you pull that high-blooded nose o' yours down out o' the clouds, an' listen to me, an' don't git the idea that 'cause what I'm talkin' about couldn't happen in Philadelphia is any good reason for thinkin' it couldn't happen here! Them two men in there is both of 'em bang-up, two-handed boys. They're both of 'em some used to gittin' what they want, an' neither of 'em's in the habit o' botherin' about who that they want belongs to. If I ain't mistook—an' I ain't—they're both of 'em honin' right heavy for that niece o' yours. Now——"

"Why—why, this is terrible! You can't mean that they would—— They wouldn't dare to actually harm her," the other sputtered, all the testy surety

gone from his voice. "They'd never—why, my dear man, they don't understand! I—I can't think that those fellows would presume to—— Why, my niece, sir, my niece is a——"

"Aw, hell!" Touissant cut in disgustedly. "She's a woman, ain't she? An' a young one, an' a mighty good-lookin' one. They don't care if she's the queen o' England. You act like you thought you was a sort o' half brother o' God! Maybe you are, back where ye come from, but ye ain't nothin' right now but a man, an' a mighty poor one! She ain't nothin' but a woman, an' a mighty pretty one! Either one o' them boys could have her for all you could do, an' they'd o' made their play before now, only they're playin' agin' each other. They both want her, an' neither one of 'em's figured out a way to start his game so's to keep the other out. Now you got it straight! You don't figure. I'm the only one they got to reckon on. It's two to one, an' all you got to do is sit tight an' keep your face closed until I need ye, an' then whatever I tell ye to do, you do it! Come on back in, now. We'll only force their hand standin' out here chinnin. Just act calm an' natural, an' I'll take care o' things somehow."

The door opened for a moment, illuminating the faces of the strange pair—the elderly man's ashen with terror—and then closed behind them.

The man hidden in the ferns raised himself cautiously, and squatted on his heels, his chin propped in his hands, thinking.

After a time he raised his head, and squinted calculatingly at the lighted window.

"That gits me!" he muttered. "Blacky Touissant takin' back talk from that old coot, an' lettin' him get away with it. An' him throwin' the bluff he's goin' to git the old boy an' this dame they talk of out o' this mess. He's sure goin' to break his head for him some time. Whyn't he do it now?" He shrugged his shoulders. "None o' my game. An' the less I know the longer I'm apt to live. I'm goin' to mosh!"

He looked regretfully at the cabin, and shook his head.

"I'd like to git under cover, but I got a hunch I'll sleep better out in the rain." He chuckled grimly. "Leastwise, I figure I got a better chance o' wakin' up."

He took a few steps away from the shack, hesitated, and then, turning back, he carefully approached the window from a different angle.

"I'd jest like to git one peek at this dame they speak of."

She sat in front of the big, sheet-iron wood stove, intently watching the men playing cards, lips slightly parted, big blue eyes eager like a child absorbed in some new and utterly engrossing scene. A slender, delicately modeled girl, perhaps eighteen or nineteen years of age, she had an indefinite naive poise, and an air of utter confidence and security.

She evidently did not share her uncle's view of the situation as being either disgusting or uncomfortable. Her whole being was vibrant with eager interest in the adventurous novelty of it. She wore a blue flannel blouse with a wide sailor collar, and a short corduroy skirt from which the tiniest of little rubber boots peeped out. Her light, wavy hair, dressed by the wind in a glorious disorder, formed a bright golden frame for a piquant, cameolike face.

A grin cracked the mask of dried blood on the face of the man outside as he looked at her. It widened, and a roughly tender chuckle came from him.

"By golly!" he whispered delightedly. "Ain't she purty, though! Well, if she ain't a purty one, sa-a-ay!" A thought came to him, and he nodded his head emphatically in response to it. "Yes, sirc! That's what she looks like. Jest like a pikcher. Jest like a pikcher in a dog-gone book."

Some movement of one of the men at the table caught his attention, and he studied the three of them, a puzzled frown on his brow. The girl turned her head to make some remark to her uncle, who stood behind her, and three pairs of sullen, ravenous eyes ate horribly of the beauty of her soft white throat in furtive, darting glances, the moment her own were turned away.

And Heenan knew! Knew why

Blacky was "tollin' the old geezer along." Knew why he had "made that bluff." Knew that each of the three men, behind the masks of trivial camaraderie that they wore, was busy planning some means for the extinction of the other two. Knew the fate of the gray-haired weakling when only one of the strong three should be left. Knew the fate of the eager-eyed girl who "looked like a pikcher in a dog-gone book!"

"That game's three-handed!" he muttered. "Blacky's in it with the other two. Aw, that ain't right. 'Tain't square, her gettin' messed up with them roughnecks, an' nobody but that nutty old coot to back her play! She ain't got no run for her money at all! Ef I jest had a gun, wouldn't I——" He swore suddenly. "My lucky night! My lucky night, an' damn me for a piker ef I don't mess in barehanded, an' back my luck to git me out!"

He stood for some time, squinting at the ground, rubbing his nose with his forefinger; he started to scratch his head as a further aid to thought, drew his hand away, covered with blood from the wound, and grinned with a sudden inspiration.

"I must be considerable cut up," he mused. "I reckon if I didn't move a whole lot I'd look right sick."

He moved around to the front of the cabin, got down on his hands and knees a few yards from the door, and called out:

"Hello, there! Help! Help! Hi! Hello in there!"

The light went out. He crawled to the door, beat on it with his fist, and called again:

"Hello, in there. Lemme in, will ye? For God's sake, open up! I'm nigh dead!"

A voice came from inside:

"Who is it?"

"I'm Bill Heenan." The man outside moaned piteously. "I got wrecked. I been all beat up on the rocks. Lemme in!"

"I know Bill Heenan." It was Touissant's voice.

After a moment the door opened, and a voice from the dark said:

"Come on in, then, an' no funny work! We got ye covered."

The man crumpled up on the threshold moaned weakly.

"Help me, will ye?" he gasped. "Oh! My leg! I can't git in. Help me, will ye?"

A form suddenly bent over him. He felt the muzzle of a gun boring into his neck, and a hand gripped his arm hard.

"Don't! Don't!" he shrieked. "Don't pull me that way! Oh! I'm all beat up!"

Touissant, bending above him, spoke. "Strike a light," he said. "He's done up, all right."

They lifted him, groaning and muttering incoherently, and laid him on the bunk near the stove. He was a ghastly sight. His head and face were masked with a thick coat of blood, and his hands and arms were smeared with it. The great, jagged gash in his blond head made him a thing of horror. The girl shrank into her uncle's arms, white-faced and shuddering at the sight of the raw ruin of flesh.

Touissant probed the wound with his fingers.

"He'll go out, I reckon," he said, nodding to the other two. "Busted up all over, most like."

One of the other men leaned over him.

"What boat was ye on?" he asked.

"Bringin'—missionary—Ketchikan—my sloop—upset—" the man on the bunk gasped out.

"The other guy?" the man questioned, shaking him. "Did he git ashore?"

"No—just me. O-oh! I'm all beat up. The—rocks! The—rocks!"

Touissant spoke.

"He's alone, all right. I know him. He had a little sloop of his own. He must o' just hit the mouth o' the crick to git it at all.

"Naw!" he went on scornfully, in answer to an unspoken question in the eyes of the other two. "Ain't one chance in ten million the other one'd git through."

He looked again at the limply sprawling, muttering man on the bunk.

"He's done for, all right!" he said.

One of the men moved back to the table, and, seating himself, began filling his pipe.

"Give him a shot o' that booze," he advised.

"What's the use?" Touissant answered, with a shrug. "He's goin' out, anyhow. Let him go!" He threw a blanket over the wounded man, and took his seat at the table again. "Come on, Del," he called to the man who still stood by the bunk. "Your deal. Rifle 'em up."

The girl, trembling, stepped forward. "Why—why, he isn't—dead," she faltered.

"No," said Touissant. "He ain't, but he will be pretty quick."

"But you haven't— Why, aren't you going to do something for him? He's—he's terribly injured! You're surely going to take care of him?"

One of the men laughed.

"He's been plenty took care of already, miss," he said.

He took up the deck, and began dealing off the cards.

The girl caught her breath sharply, shrinking from the speech and action as though from a physical blow, and turned, bewildered, appealing, to her uncle.

He was crumpled up in his chair, emptied of authority, all his habitual air of dominance and command stripped from him. The naked, pitiable fear of the utter coward showed in his vacant stare, the monotonous fumbling with his eyeglasses, the meaningless, idiotic smile that pulled at his twitching lips, the limp, shriveled look of the whole of him.

The girl looked again at the three at the table, and in the light of her terror-stricken uncle's fear she saw them for the first time, not as interesting specimens of a world other than her own performing for her amusement, but three wild beasts, only the more horrible for that they wore the guise of men.

The knowledge that chained her un-

cle helpless and shaking in his chair was hers, but her slender body straightened regally from the shock of it, her delicately rounded chin set firm as a calm-clenched fist, and her blue eyes looked from her firm-held head as steady and clear in complete knowledge of the danger as they had been in utter ignorance of it.

She stepped to the side of the bunk, and leaned above the wounded man, bravely throttling the giddy horror that threatened her grasp on consciousness as her small hands probed the bloody, disheveled head.

"Will you see to heating some water, uncle?" she said steadily. "And then find me something to use for a bandage."

The three men apparently took no notice of her action. Their disregard of it was ominous. Each, guilty of contemplated treachery to the other two, forbore to speak to her, even jestingly, fearing to precipitate the inevitable. Each noted and understood the unnatural silence. The atmosphere in the little cabin became suddenly charged with the sense of the impending conflict.

The three played on—grim, silent, tense, and watchful; each knowing the minds of the others, watching for the chance word or movement that would break their pretense of the trivial, and send two of them, perhaps all, tumbling into eternity to the accompaniment of the crashing roar of the venomous pistols.

The elderly man set some water on the stove in a large tin dipper, moving stealthily, handling things with extreme caution, as though he feared to wake some sleeper. The wounded man mumbled on monotonously. The girl wet her handkerchief in the warming water, and, kneeling by him, began gently sponging the clotted wound. The moaning man's voice sank to a bare whisper as she ministered to him, and suddenly she became aware that there was conscious meaning in what he said.

"Don't be scared," he breathed. "Don't be scared, an' for God's sake don't let on ye know I'm talkin' to ye!"

His voice rose again in a more audi-

ble, meaningless moan, and then gradually sank into the intelligent whispering:

"Keep on a-fussin' with me, an' listen to what I tell ye. I ain't bad hurt, but keep on a-fussin' with me. O-o-o-oh!"

His small, bright-blue eyes opened suddenly, and stared up at her with a reassuring, humorous twinkle, so compellingly ludicrous in contrast to his ghastly appearance, that the girl strangled a hysterical desire to laugh outright. He moaned agonizingly again, and one lid drew down in a slow, droll wink.

"Don't be scared," he mumbled on. "But this here bunch is a bad one. O-o-o-oh! I'm a square feller. I'll git ye out all right, somehow. D'ye understand me? O-o-o-oh!"

"Yes, yes," she murmured soothingly. "There now! There!" as his voice rose to a loud wail. "There now!" And then meaningly: "I understand."

"Git me somethin'," he went on. "Git me a knife o' some kind if ye kin, without gittin' caught. Butcher knife—an' old thing. I'm liable to need it."

The girl rose, wet her handkerchief in the dipper on the stove, and shook her head when she leaned above him again to apply it.

"I don't believe there's a thing of the sort about."

"Never mind." The blue eyes blazed brightly. "I'll let 'em look at me, an' scare 'em to death. O-o-o-o-o-oh!"

At the table the man sitting opposite to Touissant was dealing the cards. As he finished Touissant spoke.

"Misdeal!" he said casually.

"What's the matter?" the fellow asked.

"Ye dealt from the bottom o' the deck, ye——"

The crash of an overturned chair broke the electric instant of silence that followed, as the third man sprang backward.

As the chair clattered to the floor, Touissant's gun spat over the rim of the table, and the man opposite slumped slowly forward, till his drooping head, with a blotch the size of a man's finger just over one eye, bumped, lolled grotesquely, and lay still on the table top.

The third man's backward spring fetched him sprawling on his back on the floor at the head of the bunk where the wounded man lay.

As he fell, a splintered length of two-by-four scantling, wrenched from its place in the rough construction of the bunk, crashed into his face, wielded by the bloody apparition that hurtled to its feet at the crack of the gun. The club rose and fell again, obliterating with its stroke all semblance of a human visage from the twitching thing it fell on as completely as a wet rag wipes a picture drawn in chalk from a blackboard.

A bullet from Touissant's gun ripped through the ceiling as the scantling, swiftly thrown, caught the elbow of his outflung leveling arm just as his finger tensed on the trigger. He ducked a swinging blow from the huge figure that was on top of him almost as the club struck, and the circling arm went around his neck and clenched.

At the same instant Heenan's desperately seeking fingers found the wrist of the hand that held the gun, and with a wrenching heave he bent the crooking arm up and back till it pointed straight up, extended full length from the straining shoulder, the gun pointing toward the ceiling.

Arms locked about one another's necks, the black head and the blond grinding together, their faces buried in the hollow of each other's shoulders, legs braced far apart, backs bent, they struggled, silent, motionless, save for a slight, rhythmic serpentlike swaying of the two upheld arms.

They seemed like two men posing! Only the groaning, reedy sound of each hard-won breath, as it whistled huskily in their straining throats, and the swollen veins on the upthrown arms told of the tremendous expenditure of great, evenly matched strength that held the two huge bodies so utterly still and rigid.

The girl, crouched on the floor where the impact of the man's leap had thrown her, stared like one hypnotized at the silent struggle, her working lips forming incoherent, almost voiceless, admonitions to the man who fought for her, her little body tensed and straining in

unconscious sympathy with his struggle.

Gradually Touissant's hand that held the gun began to force itself downward. Slowly, steadily, surely, Heenan's arm bent. Inch by inch the muzzle of the gun swung nearer into line with the blond head.

The girl called imploringly to her uncle. Cuddled in a heap behind the stove, his face hid in his crossed arms, idiotic with helpless terror, he paid no heed to her call.

The girl snatched the heavy pistol that protruded from the pocket of the unconscious man on the floor by the bunk, holding it in both small hands, and crept close to the struggling men. She thrust the muzzle directly against Touissant's hand that held the gun, and fired.

The gun dropped from his shattered hand as he gave a scream of pain and surprise, and, wrenching loose from Heenan, he leaped crashing through the window.

As he jumped Heenan swept the candles from the table, plunging the cabin into darkness.

"Are ye all right, miss?" he whispered, after a little silence, broken only by his heavy breathing.

Her hand, groping in the darkness, found his, and clung tight. A storm of sobs shook her.

"Aw!" he whispered. "Don't go an' cry about it like that! Hell! It's all — Excuse me, miss. I fergot! It's all over now. Best lay low till daylight. Don't want to strike a light, 'cause he might have another gun on him."

"Oh!" she gasped. "I—I didn't kill him, did I?"

"Naw! Jest cut his finger nails for him, I reckon. Ye wa'n't none too soon, neither. He sure had me beat.

"By golly!" he went on admiringly. "If that feller ain't some man! Sa-a-a-y! Strong? He's a regular moose!"

Feeling his way in the dark, he located the man he had clubbed.

"He'll come 'round bimeby," he said, stripping his belt to tie him with. "But when he does wake up I bet he'll know somethin' tickled his chin, all right!"

He made his way to the table, and bent over the man sprawled on the top of it.

"Poor old buck!" he muttered.

"Is—is he dead?" the girl faltered.

"Yes, ma'am," said Heenan. "He's through."

The uncle had crept to the girl's side, and taken her in his arms. Heenan slipped to the floor near them, leaning back against the wall with a deep sigh of relaxation.

"Phew!" he whistled. "Gee! I'm tired!"

The girl gave an odd, hysterical little laugh, and, slipping from her uncle's arms, buried her face on Heenan's big chest, her little hands digging hard into his shoulders.

"Oh, take care of me!" she pleaded, in a perfect abandon of faith in the matter-of-fact strength of him. "Hold me tight! Tight! Please! Oh, take care of me!"

Heenan was silent for a moment, then — "Yes, ma'am," he said.

He folded his big arms about the little quivering body, patting her gently as one soothes a frightened child, with his great clumsy hand that spanned her back from the waistline to the neck.

"Virginia!" her uncle said. "Why, Virginia!"

"Shut up!" said Heenan.

After a time the bound man came to profane life, calling for Touissant between oaths.

"I dunno where Blacky's gone," said Heenan. "But there's a lady here, an' you swear ag'in I'll show ye where yer other pardner is."

The window showed a faint gray square in the first light of the early dawn when the irregular chug of a motor boat being cranked came to their ears. Heenan slipped to the window, and peered out.

A hundred yards distant a launch was just gliding out into the creek from the landing at the foot of the path that ran down from the cabin. At the wheel stood Touissant.

"Not a chance to git him," Heenan muttered to himself. "O-o-o-h, Blacky!" he called out. "Hi, Blacky!"

The figure in the launch straightened up, and looked back.

"Hold up a minute, an' take yer gang with ye. I don't want 'em."

The launch ran a little ways farther down the creek, and stopped. Heenan stepped to the bound man, and unstrapped him.

"Blacky's waitin' fer ye," he said, as the fellow got to his feet. "Take yer pardner there, an' hike."

The man sullenly lifted the body in his arms, and started silently for the door. The elderly man stared in astonishment.

"Why! You're not going to let him go?"

Heenan barred the man's way.

"Why not? What d'ye want him fer?"

"The man's a criminal," the other protested. "He must be made to pay for this outrage! He must be delivered into the hands of the law!"

Heenan shook his head.

"I ain't no officer," he said.

"But you must hold him. You must take him back to town, and hand him over to the proper authorities!"

Heenan stared.

"Hell, no!" he said. "They'd put him in jail."

"Of course," said the other, shaking with rage. "You'll pay for this dastardly outrage, at any rate," he went on, addressing the silent man who stood, stolidly waiting. "I'll see that you get the full penalty of the law, you—you ruffian, you! You'll rot in jail for this! You'll——"

Heenan stepped aside from the door, with an exclamation of disgust.

"I wouldn't put a dog in jail!" he said slowly. He nodded to the waiting man. "Go on, pardner! Hike!"

"He shall not!" the other fairly screamed, as the man started to leave. "He'll pay for this, I tell you!"

He clutched frantically at the revolver butt that showed above Heenan's belt. The big man swept him aside with a flint of his arm.

"He ain't got no gun," he said, looking down contemptuously at the angry man. "An' neither have you. Him an'

you stack up fifty-fifty. If you want him you go an' git him."

The elder man was almost crying with the knowledge of the utter impotence of the vengeful fury that shook him.

"You—you—— This is infamous!" he stammered. "You deserve to be jailed yourself for releasing that desperado! By gad, sir! I don't believe you're any better man than Touissant himself!"

"I ain't," Heenan stated calmly. "Touissant's a good man. He'd o' trimmed me all proper if the little lady hadn't butted in."

The man with the burden in his arms reached the creek, and, wading out to the waiting boat, clambered aboard. The coughing of the motor steadied; the launch swung toward the cliff-walled mouth of the little stream, poked her nose into the spray of an intruding breaker, climbed the following swell, dipped from sight down the farther slope, rose and dipped again, and the line of the cliff shut her from sight.

Near to midday Heenan signaled a launch from the cliff top, which proved to be one of many that were in search of the missing man and his niece, and the three were taken aboard for their trip back to Ketchikan.

The party of tourists that the girl and her uncle were traveling with left Ketchikan on the boat for "below" that night. Before they left they tendered Heenan a supper in honor of his bravery. Than the thrill of happiness when he held the girl in his arms during the hours in the cabin on the island no sensation will remain with Heenan longer than the agony of that supper.

He went with the party to the boat, and bade the girl good-by. As the steamer swung away from the wharf, a sharp pang of loss and loneliness bit in his heart.

"Lucky night, hell!" he muttered savagely, as the pain that was his reminder of it grew in him. "Aw, I ain't nothin' but a roughneck, nohow!" And he steered for the Cabinet Saloon.



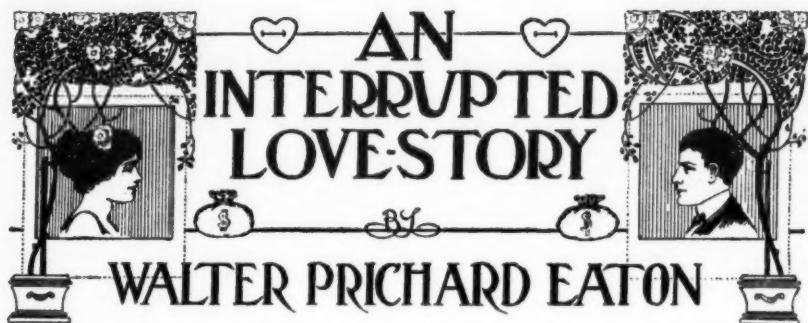
WHEN I COME HOME TO YOU

WHEN I come home to you the way seems long,
 Though weariness and care, which all the day
 Have hovered near, are routed by the song
 Of my glad heart and, vanquished, fade away;
 While fancy paints the twilight's somber hue
 With visions, dear, of coming home to you.

When I come home to you, and love, and rest,
 I smile to think, to-day I envied men
 Who only are by wealth and power blest;
 How poor they seem, I haste my steps again.
 Their treasures, after all, are small and few,
 Because, at dusk, they go not home to you.

When I come home to you and find you there,
 The wonder child clasped tight within your arms,
 The day's last gleamings haloing your hair
 And shadowing your tender eyes' deep charms;
 The same joy thrills me as when first I knew
 The glory, dear, of coming home to you.

MABEL STEVENS FREER.



AN INTERRUPTED LOVE-STORY

BY
WALTER PRICHARD EATON

THE Scribbler was sitting under his grape arbor, in the garden behind his house. The scent of roses was about him, and hollyhocks and larkspur gently nodded their colors in the wandering air. Had he lifted his eyes, glancing down across his little potato patch and the brook, he would have seen the figure of a girl descending the path from the great house on the hill beyond. She was moving slowly through the summer sunlight. But he did not lift his eyes. He was a very industrious Scribbler, and his work absorbed him. He was busily writing a story, a love story. Love stories were his specialty. He did not lift his eyes till he heard the crunch of the girl's step on the gravel path.

Then his eyes, behind their round, shell-rimmed spectacles, filled with gladness. But what he said was: "You are interrupting a masterpiece."

The girl entered the arbor and sat down in a battered old morris chair beside his homemade table.

"Am I?" she answered. "I hope the world will forgive me."

"I'm afraid it will," sighed the Scribbler, laying down his fountain pen.

He looked at the girl inquiringly, but said no more. Evidently speech was not essential to their relations. He, in his old, frayed smoking jacket and rubber-soled shoes, she in her immaculate morning frock, faced one another over the table, littered with his manuscript, and the air was intimate with their unspoken words.

But presently she broke the silence. "You are an authority on love," she said, with a little smile. "You must be, because you write so much about it—"

"That does not follow," interrupted the man, with a deprecating gesture.

"Nevertheless, I'm sure you are," she continued, "so I want your advice."

"Soon," he laughed, "I shall be asked to conduct a column in the newspapers. Is it for yourself you want it?"

He spoke banteringly, but his eyes belied his tone.

The girl shook her head.

"I am quite serious," she said. "A friend of mine is in a predicament. She has asked my advice. Before I give it I want to ask yours. Please help me, you have always been such a good friend to me."

"Of course," said he quickly, now quite grave himself.

"You know who most of my friends are," she went on. "I mean, what sort they are, naturally like myself—"

"There is no one like yourself?" he said softly.

She smiled at him wistfully, even as she reproached his interruption.

"You know what I mean," she continued. "They, too, are the daughters of very rich men, brought up in the same social atmosphere, taught to think their fathers are the bulwark of the nation, used to every luxury, hedged by a kind of divinity of dollars. You know it's pretty hard for a girl like that to marry out of her set."

The Scribbler averted his face.

"I know!" he said.

The other speaker waited a moment. Then she continued:

"I won't tell you her name, but one of my friends, whose father is very, very rich, and very, very important on Wall Street, so important that stocks drop ten points when he has a cold in his head, is being urged into matrimony. The man who wants to marry her, and whom her family want her to marry—indeed, have almost commanded her to marry—is the son of another man who is very, very rich, and who is very, very important on Wall Street, so important that the president sends for him before writing his messages, and stocks drop twenty points when he has the gripe. A marriage between these children would mean the union of two great fortunes, and of course you can see how important that would be for the welfare of the nation. Besides, they are in the same set. Their boxes at the opera are side by side. When they were small, a nurse, a coachman, and a footman took them driving from the same block on the avenue. You see, they really ought to get married, for the good of the country and the preservation of the social orders."

"Why don't they, then?" asked the Scribbler, toying with his fountain pen.

"Perhaps they will," answered the girl. "My friend hasn't decided. That's why she asked my advice. You see, she doesn't love him. He's very nice. He goes down to Wall Street every day, and plays racket beautifully, and managed to stay at Harvard almost three years. But she doesn't love him."

"Why doesn't she love him?" asked the man. "Your description sounds extraordinarily alluring."

"Just because she loves some one else, perhaps," the girl replied.

"Then why doesn't she marry the some one else?" said the Scribbler.

"Ah," said the girl, "that is her dilemma! He does not love her."

"And so your friend wants to know," asked the man, "whether she shall compromise with her ideals of spiritual union, and marry the man she doesn't

love, for the good of the nation and the social register? Is that it?"

"That is about it," the girl replied. "For those reasons, and to keep peace in the family."

"H'm!" said the Scribbler. "What sort of a chap is this other man, whom she loves and who doesn't love her?"

The girl did not reply for a moment. She looked out over the sunlit garden, where the blue larkspur nodded in a wandering breeze.

"He is very nice," she said softly, "and very proud, and very poor. He is so poor that he cannot even afford an automobile, and he does not know any more about Wall Street than a puppy, nor care any more about society than Emanuel Kant."

"As bad as that!" said the man.

"What does he do?"

Again the girl paused before replying.

"He—he is an artist," she said.

"H'm!" the other replied. "A poor lot, these artists and scribblers, dabbling with make-believe dream stuff, and letting the national welfare go hang! Why does your friend love him, then?"

For the third time there was a pause, a long pause.

"She loves him—she loves him"—the reply came haltingly at first—"because, for one thing, so she tells me, he is so different, so blessedly different! All her life she has walked with brokers, talked with brokers, dined with brokers, listened to the opera with brokers, motored with brokers, golfed with brokers, nothing but brokers day in and day out, year in and year out, till it seems to her sometimes as if the world were one great grab for wealth."

"And when it wasn't brokers it was brokers' wives and brokers' daughters, trying pitifully to break out of the dollar atmosphere, but never really wanting to, rushing around in motor cars with turkeys for the poor, and believing they were charitable, giving tea to artists, and believing they were artistic, but all the time never knowing what it is to be poor, never knowing a single creative impulse, never comprehending the real things they dumbly dabble with."

I remember at a dinner once we were talking about socialism, and one of these women said: 'Socialism strikes at the very root of Christianity.' Somebody was polite enough to ask her why, and she answered that the root of Christianity is charity, and if you have no rich and no poor, you can have no charity!"

The girl laughed bitterly.

"Yes," she went on, "I, too, know the sort of people my friend means! But he! He is so different—my friend declares. He actually doesn't know what a margin is, except in a book! He is poor, terribly poor—that is, as we look at things. But he sees beauties in the world we never guess, and goes on his way, unconscious of us, getting those beauties upon—canvas. Besides, his soul is delicate, and his voice is sweet, and his heart is kindly toward all his fellow creatures, children, birds, cats, dogs, and flowers. He has never guessed there are such things as social classes, but only men and women. He has a sense of humor, too. All this is why my friend loves him!"

It was the man's turn to be silent. Mechanically he sorted his manuscript into a pile.

"And you say this man does not love your friend?" he finally asked.

The girl shook her head.

"How does she know?"

"Because he has never told her so," she replied. "If he loved her he would tell her so, wouldn't he?"

"Not necessarily," the man answered. "Just because he loved her, he might *not* tell her so. You say he is unaware of social classes. That is probably not quite true. No intelligent person can be unaware of them, much as he may regret them or regard them as false, arbitrary, artificial, not to say an insult to the Almighty. But to ignore them in one's own person is one thing, to ask a woman to ignore them when she has been hedged by them all her life, when they have contributed to her friendships and family and physical comforts from her earliest years, is quite another. A man might well hesitate before taking such a step."

The girl regarded the speaker reproachfully.

"I cannot think," she said, "that this man whom my friend loves is so weak. I cannot think that he has so failed to read her. He must know how little in her heart all this tinsel show of position and luxury weighs against the great fact of love!"

The Scribbler averted his face from her reproachful glance.

"There is another reason," he went on. "You say your friend is very rich, and this man is very poor, without so much as a motor car to cover his nakedness. You say he is proud, too. But have you—or has your friend—any idea of what pride really is? This man would probably not care very much what the world said about his motives in marrying your friend; that is a minor matter, if he knew in his heart his motives were pure. But pride, like a cancer, would gnaw at his soul for every dollar of her father's money which he spent, money which his own two hands had not earned, and money which, by Heaven, he probably believes was stolen from the people, under the abominable sanction of the law!"

"But," cried the girl, with a little exclamation of joy, "if my friend married this man, her father would probably cut her off without so much as an electric runabout!"

"Worse and worse," the Scribbler replied. "If this man is half you say he is, how could he in decency ask a girl like your friend to give up for him the manifold luxuries and comforts of her home, her box at the opera, her whole social life, even, as you suggest, perhaps her family? No, he could not do it, and continue to respect himself."

The girl struck her delicate finger tips impatiently on the arms of the battered old morris chair.

"Oh, you are a disappointment to me!" she cried. "You, who write so beautifully of love, do not respect its sanctity at all! You do not even understand it! Don't you suppose a woman, a real woman, would *gladly* give up everything for the man she loved?"

"Yes," replied the other gently, "I

know that she would. But I also know that no man, no *real* man, would ask her to do it."

There was a note of finality in his tone. The girl straightened up in the chair, as if to rise.

"And you don't think it would do any good if my friend should sacrifice her pride, and give this man a chance to tell her that he loved her—if he does?" she asked.

The Scribbler turned away his face.

"I don't think that would do any good," he answered, in a low, strange voice.

"And it is your advice, then, that my friend marry the other man, who is so very rich, and whom her family are driving her to marry, and whom she doesn't love at all? It is your advice that she break her heart under orange blossoms?"

The Scribbler's face was still averted. His hands were closing and unclosing like vises over his knees, under the table. He did not answer for a long moment. Then he said:

"I cannot advise as to that. I—I cannot. She must do as she thinks best."

"Very well," said the girl, "I will tell her."

She stood up. She looked at the man. He kept his face averted. She waited for him to turn, but he would not.

"Thank you—and—and good-by,"

she whispered, and moved out of the arbor.

Then the man turned his face and watched her go. It was a face drawn, and tense, and hungry. It was a face that was a battleground, where a great will contended with a great emotion. The will had the better of it. The man sat quite still.

He watched the girl move slowly down the path through the larkspur. Her figure seemed bowed. At the little bird bath her shoulders suddenly heaved convulsively, a sob like a cry escaped her lips, and pressing her handkerchief over her mouth she began almost to run.

Over the man's face swept the fresh charge of emotion, reinforced, and the defenses of the will were suddenly crumpled up. Joy raised its banners in his eyes. He sprang down the path. He laid his hand on the girl's shoulder, he swept her around, he looked one brief instant into her eyes, crying: "What does it all matter, save only love?" And then he caught her against his breast.

A little wind came wandering over the larkspur and blew the sheets of his love story off the table, frisking them about the arbor. A robin began to sing in the pear tree. From the great house on the hill came the faint toot of a motor horn. But the two in the sun-soaked garden heard only the beating of their hearts.



A PRAYER

GIVE me the power to love and to live,
Power to listen, to hope, to forgive.
Give me the grace to be patient, to see.
Give me deep knowledge of Thy love and Thee.
Give me the mercy that no words can tell.
Give me the kindness that great hearts impel.
Give me the power to feel and to know.
As Thou wouldst have me—fashion me so.

VIRGINIA KLINE.

FOR BOOK LOVERS

VAUGHAN KESTER'S last book, "The Just and the Unjust," published by the Bobbs-Merrill Company, is a disappointment. It is a volume of almost four hundred pages over which the story is rather thinly spread. The plot could have been embraced in a hundred pages less to its great advantage.

It rests upon an accusation of murder falsely brought against the hero, John North, and that it is false is frankly stated early in the book; and not only that, but the real murderer, the manner in which he committed the crime, and his motive therefor are made unmistakably clear.

To take such a theme and develop it so rapidly robs it of any interest which it might possess as a mystery story, and all that is left to the author, in order to make up the number of pages deemed necessary by the publishers to create a man's-size book, is to dilate upon these circumstances, include a rather uninteresting account of John North's trial and conviction, and tell how he was snatched from the hangman's noose at the last minute.

A grotesque character called Shrimplin is introduced, apparently for the purpose of padding, for he has absolutely no vital connection with the plot, and as a character he has no interest at all. The descriptions of his doings are unspeakably dreary.

The two villains of the plot, Langham and the gambler, Gilmore, are well done and give the story the only real interest it possesses. John North is a good deal of a prig, and one finds it difficult to stir up much real sympathy for him.

His sweetheart, Elizabeth Herbert, is one of the goody-goody type of young women that constantly provokes the reader to impatience.

To be genuinely and consistently funny through three hundred and odd pages without a single let-down ought to settle one's claim to the title of humorist if anything will. George Fitch meets the test triumphantly in "My Demon Motor Boat," published recently by Little, Brown & Co.

Beguiled, much against his will, by the subtle arguments of his friend to purchase the *Imp*, he finds, like the newly married man, that "his troubles begin." At the very outset, the motor boat displays defects of character that would startle an alienist, and moral obliquities that are the despair of the righteous. He speedily becomes acquainted with all the moody possibilities of the *Imp's* engine, apparently the most temperamental piece of machinery ever invented.

He also describes perfectly the careless intrepidity and nonchalance with which every beginner confidently tackles new and intricate problems, and rushes into all kinds of danger, always escaping miraculously. It is only after the novice learns something of the forces he is attempting to utilize, and listens to the advice of superserviceable friends who know it all, that he begins to make mistakes and encounter all sorts of mishaps. How familiar we are with these things in our own experience!

Not only to the seasoned manipulator of motor boats, but to those who are but slightly acquainted with them and

their manifold eccentricities, this book will supply an hour or two of intense and not always quiet amusement.



A collection of fairly good stories has been published by Brand Whitlock through the Bobbs-Merrill Company, the volume taking its title, "The Fall Guy," from the first story of the collection.

Some of these stories were published a number of years ago, notably one in AINSLEE'S, "The Old House Across the Street." There are crook stories, stories of political graft, love stories, golfing stories, and stories of social reform.

Mr. Whitlock doesn't seem to us particularly happy in his attempt to portray the pretty society girl—certainly as he sees her she bears little resemblance to her sister, created by Mr. Robert Chambers; nor, it may be said, to the girl of real life. So the real Alice Gray—and we suppose she actually exists somewhere—would hardly recognize herself in "The Finals and Alice Gray."

The best story in the book is, in our opinion, that which is reserved to the very last, "Lead Us Not Into Temptation." Mr. Whitlock has made a good yarn of this, probably because of his interest and experience in municipal politics, and he doubtless knows when he could lay his hand on more than one Connie Byrnes.

Next to this one "The Fall Guy" ranks, and for the same reason, i. e., the author's familiarity with the theme and types of which he writes.

Both of these tales have more than the average of human interest.

Of the rest of the fourteen, "The Last Chance," "The Girl That's Down," and "In the Fall" are the only ones that will particularly interest the reader.

All the stories have some pretensions to critical consideration as to style and theme, but they lack what theatrical people call "punch."



The causes leading to another war between France and Germany constitute the theme of a new novel by Maurice

Leblanc, "The Frontier," published by the George H. Doran Company.

This is quite a different tale from "Arsène Lupin" and "813," for it is fundamentally a love story, the sentimental complication giving rise to incidents which lead more or less logically to the opening hostilities between the two countries.

The episode which finally determined the conflict seems to us hardly to reach the dignity of a *casus belli*, and probably would not have done so unless the parties were more or less eagerly seeking some excuse, and the history of recent Franco-German difficulties seems to indicate that the opposite is the fact.

The scene of the story is laid near the Alsatian frontier.

It all grew out of the indiscretion of Philippe Morestal with Suzanne Henriot. Philippe should have known better, for he is not only a professor in the University of Paris, but a staid and sober married man—supposedly. Suzanne is the pretty daughter of a bourgeois magistrate—she offers the professor the apple, and he eats. On the same night that this happens the fathers of the guilty couple are captured by a German outpost and held on a charge of aiding deserters from the German army, and Philippe is called upon, since he is supposed to have been with the two men, to tell how he spent the night. Naturally he tries to conceal his meeting with Suzanne, and his blundering under examination makes matters worse, until finally the truth comes out, and the whole episode develops into an international one, and war results.

It is a pretty good story on the whole, much better in construction than anything in the author's previous work, though not quite so interesting as to plot.



"The Mystery of the Second Shot," by Rufus Gillmore, published by D. Appleton & Co., is a detective story of a quality much above the average, and no one who has a weakness for this type of fiction should miss the chance to read it.

Young John Ashley is the hero of this exciting tale. He is a Boston reporter attached to the staff of the *Eagle*, and has on a previous case, the famous "Extension Bag Mystery," done some sharp work, which led to a solution.

President Newhall, of the Province Trust Company, is one of those financiers who has difficulty in discriminating between trust funds and his own property, and consequently a day of reckoning comes, and he disappears suddenly one morning, only to be found dead that same night in his own city house, which had been left vacant for the summer.

When Ashley hears of the president's disappearance, his instinct tells him that if he can find him it will be the biggest piece of news in connection with the trust company's failure, and his efforts are rewarded to the extent of discovering the man dead under circumstances which point to his murder.

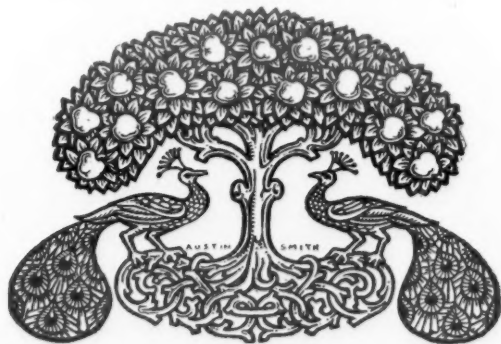
So the solution of one mystery leads to the other, and Ashley's problem is to bring to light the facts showing the exact manner in which Newhall was killed, for he died by a pistol bullet, the weapon being in the hands of— But no, it is best to leave this to the reader.

The story is well told, the developments being entirely logical and plausible, and the style attractive.



Important New Books.

- "The Sign at Six," Stewart Edward White, Bobbs-Merrill Co.
- "Paul, the Minstrel," Arthur C. Benson, G. P. Putnam's Sons.
- "The Recording Angel," Corra Harris, Doubleday, Page & Co.
- "Corporal Cameron," Ralph Connor, George H. Doran Co.
- "My Lady's Garter," Jacques Futelle, Rand, McNally & Co.
- "The Plunderer," Roy Norton, W. J. Watt & Co.
- "The Soul of a Tenor," W. J. Henderson, Henry Holt & Co.
- "In the Wireless House," Arthur Train, Century Co.
- "My Life in Prison," Donald Lowrie, Mitchell Kennerley.
- "The Opened Door," Alfred Ollivant, Doubleday, Page & Co.
- "Mary Perchell," Mrs. Belloc Lowndes, Charles Scribner's Sons.
- "The Blue Wall," Richard Washburn Child, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.
- "The Dewpond," Charles Marriott, John Lane Co.
- "The Aeroplane in War," C. G. White and Harry Harper, J. B. Lippincott Co.
- "Elizabeth in Retreat," Margaret Westrup, John Lane Co.



Talks With Ainslee's Readers

IT pays best to advertise an article of merit in the medium that reaches the greatest number of people who need or desire the article advertised. People who buy AINSLEE's do so because of a desire for entertainment. The object of AINSLEE's is to provide entertainment. Therefore, the best medium in which for AINSLEE's to advertise is AINSLEE's itself. In every number we feel that we are placing before you a comprehensive and convincing advertisement of our own magazine. We do not refer to the single-page announcement of the coming number that is to be found each month in the regular advertising section. We refer to the one hundred and sixty pages of fiction, verse, and essay. In the present number we believe that we have made extremely good use of our space, as the "ad" men say.

Marie Van Vorst, May Futrelle, Andrew Soutar, Mrs. Wilson Woodrow, Walter Prichard Eaton, Anna Alice Chapin, F. Berkeley Smith, Wells Hastings, and all the others, we dare say, have never regarded their work in the light of advertising copy, any more than William Shakespeare ever dreamed that he was serving as press agent for the prince of Denmark, or as publicity man for Mark Antony. Nevertheless, the stories of these writers are good advertisements for the magazine that prints them, and, because of the character of its public, AINSLEE's is the ideal medium in which to place them.

AS a worthy successor to Marie Van Vorst's "Pichioni" we have selected for the November novelette a charming Parisian romance, by Anne Warwick, entitled "Inside Out." At the opening of the story two young working girls, pausing near the entrance to a splendid hotel, watch the gorgeously gowned women alight from their cars and carriages. As they discuss longingly all this luxury and the happiness they suppose to go with it, they are overheard by a white-bearded old gentleman. Did they really be-

lieve that there was happiness in all this? He would show them. He would provide, under certain conditions, an opportunity for them to observe all this luxury at close range for themselves. Through their subsequent adventures a badly tangled affair of the fashionable world is straightened out in a most unexpected manner. It is an original little novel and extremely entertaining.



MAY FUTRELLE's contribution to this number, "Puss in a Corner," and "The Green Bottle," which will be printed in the November issue, come about as close to AINSLEE's ideal of the entertaining short story as anything we have been able to give you. These two tales, in our opinion, are a delightful fulfillment of the promise held forth by Mrs. Futrelle's book, "The Secretary of Frivolous Affairs."

You have read "A Roughneck's Lucky Night" in this issue. Do you not find in William Slavens McNutt's best work something of the same rugged strength that characterized the Alaskan stories that brought Jack London fame in AINSLEE's years ago? Mr. McNutt's next tale, "Bill Heenan Gets Square," has all the power and grip of the one in this number.

Another strong piece of work is Nalbro Bartley's Philippine story, "By Way of Suggestion." In direct contrast with these you will find a whimsical little tale by Nina Wilcox Putnam, author of "In Search of Arcady," and a buoyant romance of a fascinating young actress, who, stranded in a small Southern town, finds "the men too friendly and the women not friendly enough." "Millinery and Mules" is the seemingly incongruous title of the latter, and Marie Conway Oemler, who wrote "The Eternal Two," is its author.

Horace Fish, a comparatively new writer, whose work in *Harper's* has attracted considerable attention, contributes "Esposito," a languorous, colorful tale of Spain. It is of

a length that does not appeal to editors—halfway between the novelette and the short story; it does not deal with the people you have learned to look for in AINSLEE fiction, and it makes no especial appeal through either characters or setting to American readers. But it is written with so much charm, with such real distinction, that we felt that no magazine whose object is to entertain could afford to let it go. We are anxious to see if you, too, will fall under the spell of it.

Edgar Saltus in "The Suspect" handles an ingenious mystery plot with his accustomed cleverness. Thomas Chesworth contributes "The Duelists," a sparkling little love tale with a genuine surprise in its ending, and Anna Alice Chapin promises us another adventure in the career of Eve.



THE word "essay" does not, as a rule, hold forth promise of crisp entertainment. For that reason AINSLEE'S does not, as a rule, print essays. But once in a very great while some delicious bit of nonfiction comes along that simply has to be printed. It is classified in the table of contents as an "essay," just as the brilliant diamond is defined in the dictionary as "native carbon crystallized in the isometric system." An exhilarating example of just what we mean is "A Confirmed Bachelor," by Charles Vale, to be printed in this coming number.

"No career," writes Mr. Vale, "has so many responsibilities as that of the bachelor, and only careful training can enable him to carry out his duties with complete satisfaction to himself and the woman he has not

married. For a married man is responsible merely to his wife . . . a bachelor is responsible, not simply to one woman, or even to one at a time, but to all who might have been his wives, or wife. He has not to reconcile a single woman to living with him; he has to reconcile many women to living solitary lives."

The author gives detailed advice to young men who wish to prepare themselves for this unselfish career. The profession is not an easy one, the author tells us, for "women are so attractive in their unstudied moments that there is perpetual temptation for a bachelor to renounce his unselfishness and permit a brunette to sacrifice her freedom and enlarge his expenditure."

But to appreciate "A Confirmed Bachelor" you must read it all.



THE editor of AINSLEE'S may have accidentally discovered the most artistic thing in the world.

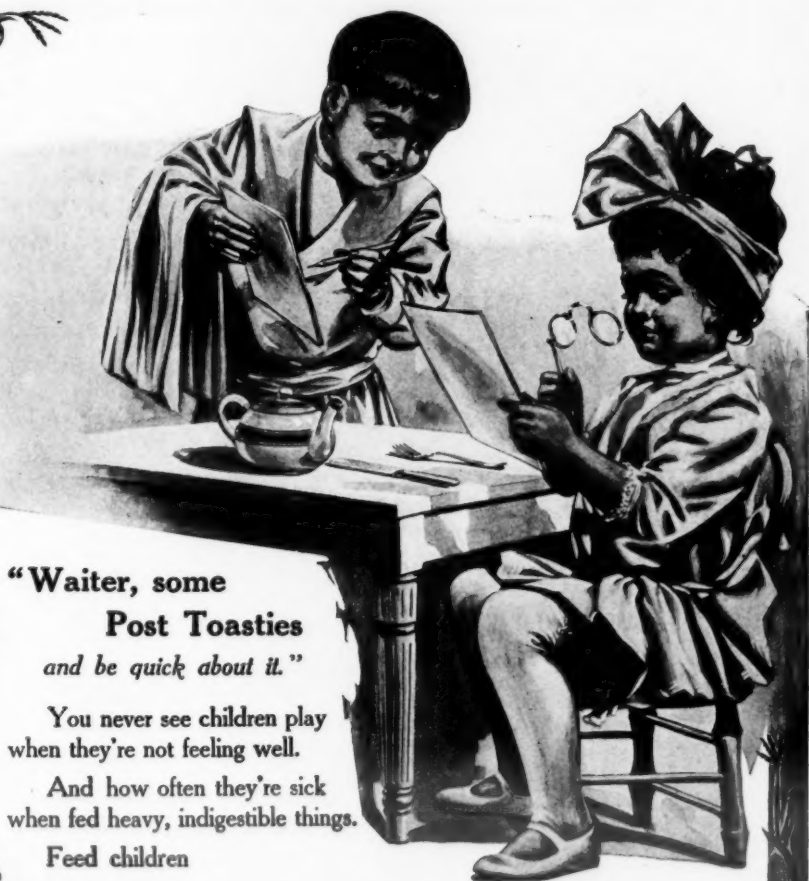
The other day a pale-faced, soulful-eyed literary person said to us, half reproachfully, half in question: "You do not care for things that are—er—artistic, do you?" We must have betrayed our bewilderment, for the literary person added, in explanation: "Things that have unhappy endings, you know."

We were worried. Later in the day we laid the matter before a ruddy-faced, two-listed man who sleeps with the windows open.

"Why," he grinned, "if things with unhappy endings are artistic, then the most artistic thing in the world must be a dog with a can tied to his tail."

We felt much relieved.





**"Waiter, some
Post Toasties
and be quick about it."**

You never see children play
when they're not feeling well.

And how often they're sick
when fed heavy, indigestible things.

Feed children

Post Toasties

as often as they want them

Then note how much they feel like playing.

They'll eat Post Toasties, the crisp, delicately browned, sweet
bits of corn, three times a day—if you let 'em—for

"The Memory Lingers"

Postum Cereal Company, Limited,
Battle Creek, Mich., U. S. A.

Canadian Postum Cereal Co., Ltd.,
Windsor, Ontario, Canada



Lochinvar
and
Ellen

"So stately
his form,
And so lovely
her face,
That never a hall
Such a galliard
did grace."

Famous
Sweethearts

Like the stories of the famous sweethearts of romance and history Nabisco Sugar Wafers always delight. Their fragile goodness imparts a new charm to every form of dessert. In ten cent tins, also in twenty-five cent tins.



A
Famous
Sweet

CHOCOLATE TOKENS — Another exquisite dessert confection — chocolate coated.

NATIONAL BISCUIT
COMPANY

Summer-time always on tap!

Papas and mammas worry a lot more than they need, at the approach of the raw, bleak days of Winter. If they would arrange now to have *summer-time always on tap* in their home, it would save much nervousness over threatened colds, sore throat, croup, diphtheria and other troubles that almost all come to their little folks from catching cold first—in drafty rooms or on cold floors.



AMERICAN & IDEAL RADIATORS & BOILERS

will make homey-like any kind of a house or building—not too hot or cold at all—but just right—just as we all want it—uniform temperature all the day long, and night, too—flooding the house with Summer temperature at the turn of a valve.

With an outfit of IDEAL Boiler and AMERICAN Radiators the coal-bills grow smaller; uneven heating and repair bills disappear; ashes, soot and coal-gases are unknown in the living-rooms; housework and cleaning are reduced one-half; and the whole house is made a far better, happier, healthier place to live in and work in. The phenomenal success of IDEAL Boilers and AMERICAN Radiators is also largely due to the fact that they are made in sections so that even their largest parts can be carried through an ordinary sized doorway.



A No. 2-22-W IDEAL Boiler and 455 sq. ft. of 38-in. AMERICAN Radiators, costing owner \$2520, were used to heat this cottage. At this price the goods can be bought of any reputable, competent fitter. This did not include cost of labor, pipe, valves, freight, etc., which are extra and vary according to climatic and other conditions.

The necessary piping and AMERICAN Radiators are set in place without tearing up partitions or floors, or disturbing occupants, and the IDEAL Boiler is quickly erected and connected up without the necessity of removing the old-fashioned heating devices until ready to start fire in the new heating outfit. For this reason IDEAL Boilers and AMERICAN Radiators can be quickly installed in Winter weather when the old, crude heaters get badly worn or collapse. If you are weary and discouraged with the everlasting blacking, repairing, fire-coaking, scuttle-heating, etc., discard the old-fashioned heating and begin at once the safe, sanitary, reliable way of heating by IDEAL Boilers and AMERICAN Radiators. Write us to-day for booklet (FREE): "Ideal Heating."

Write us also for catalogue of ARCO WAND Vacuum Cleaner, that sets in cellar and is connected by iron suction pipes to rooms above. It is the first genuinely practical machine put on the market, and will last as long as the building.



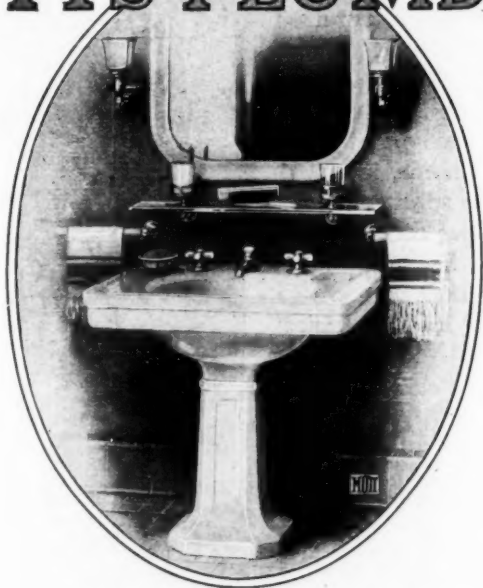
Showrooms in all large cities

AMERICAN RADIATOR COMPANY

Write Department 39
816-522 S. Michigan
Avenue, Chicago

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.

MOTT'S PLUMBING



This new pedestal lavatory—the “Valcour”—is a typical Mott product. Beauty and usefulness are admirably combined in its design.

For the ideal lavatory no material is comparable with Mott's Vitreous Ware or Imperial Solid Porcelain.

The white, china-like surface of Mott's Vitreous Ware and Imperial Solid Porcelain immediately suggests perfect cleanliness—the high lustre denotes a fine and hard texture, *insuring* cleanliness. The material is extra heavy and imparts great strength and durability.

“MODERN PLUMBING”—For complete information regarding bathroom or kitchen equipment, write for “Modern Plumbing,” an 80-page booklet illustrating 24 model bathroom interiors ranging in cost from \$73 to \$3,000. Sent on request with 4c. for postage.

THE J. L. MOTT IRON WORKS

1828 EIGHTY-FOUR YEARS SUPREMACY 1912
FIFTH AVENUE AND SEVENTEENTH ST., NEW YORK
WORKS AT TRENTON, N. J.

BRANCHES:—Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, Minneapolis, Washington, St. Louis, New Orleans, Denver, San Francisco, San Antonio, Atlanta, Seattle, Portland (Ore.), Indianapolis, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, O., Kansas City, Salt Lake City.

CANADA.—The Mott Co., Ltd., 114 Bleury Street, Montreal, Que.



All the joys of the Crisp Out-doors invite your

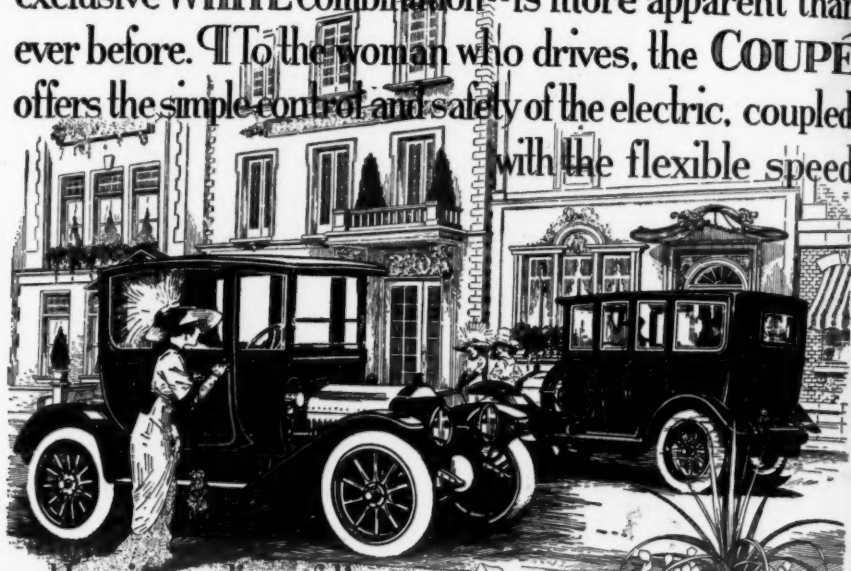
KODAK

EASTMAN KODAK CO., ROCHESTER, N. Y., *The Kodak City.*

Catalog free at the dealers or by mail.

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.

In **WHITE TOWN CARS** the advantages of the **WHITE** electrical starting and lighting system, together with the logical left-side drive -- an exclusive **WHITE** combination -- is more apparent than ever before. ¶ To the woman who drives, the **COUPÉ** offers the simple control and safety of the electric, coupled with the flexible speed



and touring radius of the gasoline roadster. ¶ In the **BERLINE LIMOUSINE**, a folding partition behind the driving seat allows the owner, when he chooses to operate his car, to remain in the same luxurious interior with his family and guests. ¶ **WHITE TOWN CARS** are beautifully finished and appointed to the last detail, and are the choice of motor coach connoisseurs everywhere. ¶ The White Company -- Cleveland.



We want
you to
taste these

*Fourteen kinds of biscuit
goodies a little more
tempting than any confec-
tions you ever ate.*

Sunshine Specialties

THEY include English Style Biscuits—sugar wafers and biscuit bonbons—the “Quality Biscuits of America.” They are light and wholesome as the sunshine in which they are baked, in the “Bakery with a Thousand Windows.” One of them is called Hydrox—a chocolate cream biscuit as delicious as it sounds. It is made of two crisp chocolate wafers joined with a thick layer of richly-flavored cream—a most appetizing dainty to serve with jelly, or ices or tea, or a complete dessert in itself.

Send us your name and address and the name of your grocer with 10c (stamps or coin) to pay postage, and we will send you this Sunshine “Revelation Box” FREE. Or, simply send us your own and your grocer’s name and we will send you our Sunshine “Taste Box,” containing five kinds, Free and postpaid. Address

LOOSE-WILES BISCUIT COMPANY

Bakers of Sunshine Biscuits

559 Causeway Street,
BOSTON, MASS.



Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.

Two-Year Corns

Can be Ended in Two Days

Your oldest corn—pared and doctored since you can remember—can be forever removed in this simple way.

Apply a little Blue-jay plaster. It is done in a jiffy, and the pain stops instantly.

Then that wonderful wax—the B & B wax—gently undermines the corn. In

two days it loosens and comes out. No pain, no soreness, no inconvenience. You simply forget the corn.

A million corns a month are removed in that way.

And they never come back. New corns may come if you continue tight shoes, but the old ones are gone completely.

All this is due to a chemist's invention, which everyone should know.



A in the picture is the soft B & B wax. It loosens the corn.
B protects the corn, stopping the pain at once.
C wraps around the toe. It is narrowed to be comfortable.
D is rubber adhesive to fasten the plaster on.

Blue-jay Corn Plasters

Sold by Druggists—15c and 25c per package

Sample Mailed Free. Also Blue-jay Bunion Plasters.

(240)

Bauer & Black, Chicago and New York, Makers of Surgical Dressings, etc.

Show Card Writing

The "big store" demand for expert show card writers exceeds the supply. "Free lance" show card writers are making money everywhere. The work is clean, pleasant and profitable. If show card writing appeals to you, write to the I. C. S. today for full information which tells how you can qualify in your spare time. Write now.
International Correspondence Schools
Box 1199H, Scranton, Pa.

Hay Fever and Asthma

relieved by HIMALYA. Send for Free Trial Bottle of Himalya, the valuable remedy for Hay Fever and Asthma. We have hundreds of reliable testimonials showing positive and permanent cures to persons who have suffered for years after all other remedies and change of climate had failed.

Write today to the

HIMALYA CO.

296 Howard Street,
Detroit, Mich.

A Peerless Card

Just what the name implies—Peerless, unapproached, unequalled, unrivalled, is an accurate description of the

Peerless Patent Book Form Cards

They are more than a card; they are an expression of personality, individuality. They are not only better, but they represent actual economy, because they eliminate waste. Being in book form, every card is used just when detached. They are always flat, unmarred and clean, and all the edges are perfectly smooth and sharp. They can only be appreciated by being seen and used. Send today for a sample tab and detach the cards one by one as you would use them. Their perfection will thrill you.

OUR SMART
CARD IN
CASE



The John B. Wiggins Company

Engravers Plate Printers Die Embossers

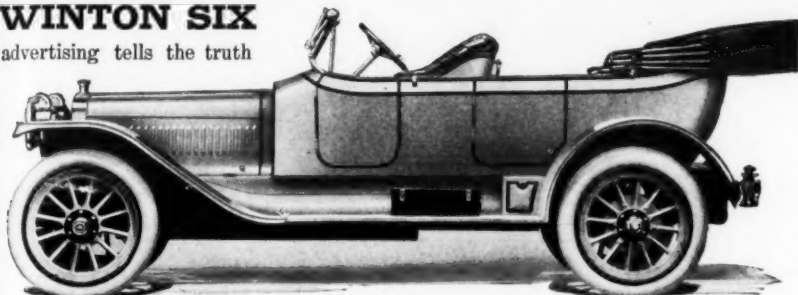
Established 1897

66-68 East Adams St., Chicago

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.

WINTON SIX

advertising tells the truth



THIS CAR PUT SIXES ON THE MAP

OUR prediction (made in 1907), that sixes would sweep every other type of car from the high-grade field, has come true with a vengeance. Half a hundred different makes of sixes now on the market, and new makes coming out every week. Today a man apologizes to his friends if he drives less than six cylinders.

The Winton Six did it. This car proved six-cylinder superiority over every other type of car, and forced many makers, against their will, to acknowledge the inferiority of four-cylinder cars.

The Winton Six, first marketed in June, 1907, has never required a single radical change. That's a record, never made by any other car, for excellence—excellence that did not require annual tinkering, improving, refining. And today it is right up-to-the-minute in everything that makes a tip-top car worth while.

Standard in Type and Detail

The Winton Six set the standard for six-cylinder cars, both as a type and in detail, as for instance, 48 H. P. motor, self-cranking, gasoline tank at the rear, accessibility, etc. Also it is the only car that has established, by sworn figures of individual owners, its repair cost. The Winton Six record is 22.8 cents per 1000 miles.

Furthermore, because the Winton Company is one of the best managed industrial properties in the world, is not over-capitalized, carries no funded debt, is not mortgaged, has not over-expanded, and does business, both buying and selling, on a cash basis—due to these causes, it is possible for us to put into the Winton Six all the quality any high-grade motor car can have, and to sell it to you at a price \$1000 below the nearest competition. You can buy sixes from \$1500 up. You cannot approach Winton Six quality for less than \$4000 except when you buy a \$3000 Winton Six.

Avoiding Excessive Overhead

We show by detailed figures, based on commercial reports compiled by Haskins & Sella, certified public accountants, that on half a dozen high-priced sixes you pay for overhead alone \$602.38 per car more than the overhead charge on the Winton Six. Overhead includes capital stock, bonds, mortgages, gold notes, plant depreciation, etc., not one of which makes a car look finer, run better, or last longer. When you buy a Winton Six you escape this \$602.38 excess charge.

And in the Winton Six you get the car that put sixes on the map, the car that forced the industry to come to sixes, the one six that has stood the test of six years without having to be redesigned, remodeled, or discarded. The one leader, and it costs \$3000. You cannot afford to have less than highest quality, and you need not pay more than \$3000. The Winton Six is the ideal purchase for you.

Let us send you our 64-page catalog. It gives all the facts. Write today.

THE WINTON MOTOR CAR CO.,

122 Berca Road, Cleveland, O.

Branch Houses in New York, Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pittsburg, Cleveland, Detroit, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Kansas City, Seattle, and San Francisco.

AINSLEE'S FOR NOVEMBER

will contain

INSIDE OUT

A sparkling Parisian romance of
novelette length by

Anne Warwick

Among a dozen unusually enter-
taining short stories in the same
number will be another fascinating
mystery tale of society by

May Futrelle

Published October 15th. Order from
your news dealer now.

AINSLEE'S FOR NOVEMBER

Our Factory Price \$6.75 Your Dealer Asks \$14.00

Quarter-sawed oak MASTER-BUILT Chair,

Marokene Leather Cushion,
height 37½ in.,
width 31 in.,
depth 21 in.



Brooks Chair
No. 11

Scores of Bargains in

MASTER-BUILT Furniture

Write for Free Book

Make your home comfortable and attractive by strong, beautiful furniture. Write for our furniture book. It illustrates and describes chairs, tables, benches, desks, couches, in many styles and sizes. Every piece sold direct from our factory on a binding Money-Back Guarantee. Half the retail price or less. Shipped to you in complete sections. Assembled in a few minutes with a screw driver. All the work done here in the factory by skilled cabinet-makers. Material—beautifully grained quarter-sawed oak. We finish in the color you desire.

Factory Prices enable you to buy double the amount of furniture your dealer would give you for the same money. Don't delay—write a postal for the Furniture Book at once to

Brooks Manufacturing Co.
4410 Rust Avenue Saginaw, Mich.

Dealer's
Price \$35.00
Our Factory Price
\$15.50

for this extension dining table of choice quarter-sawed oak; top closed 48 in., 72 in. extension. Everything you desire in appearance. Most durable construction.

Brooks Table
No. 314



Is the Money Always There?

Your special training—or lack of it—hits you right in the money pocket. With everything going up but the salaries of *untrained* men you've got to decide mighty quick how you can win a better position and earn more.

You can succeed in some *chosen* line of work, just as thousands of other ambitious men have succeeded through the help of the International Correspondence Schools. Over four hundred every month *voluntarily* report advancement due to I. C. S. help. The same opportunity to earn more is open to you, no matter who you are or what you do.

To learn of the special way by which the I. C. S. can help *you*, simply mark and mail the attached coupon today. Marking the coupon costs nothing and puts you under no obligation. Mark it **NOW**.

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS

Box 1199 SCRANTON, PA.

Explain, without further obligation on my part, how I can qualify for the position before which I mark X.

Electrical Engineer
Elec. Lighting Supt.
Telephone Expert
Architect
Building Contractor
Architectural Draftsman
Structural Engineer
Concrete Construction
Mechan. Engineer
Mechanical Draftsman
Civil Engineer
Mine Superintendent
Stationary Engineer
Plumbing & Steam Fitting
Gas Engineer
Automobile Running

Civil Service
Bookkeeping
 stenographer & Typewriting
Window Trimming
Show Card Writing
Lettering and Sign Painting
Advertising
Commercial Illustrating
Industrial Designing
Commercial Law
Teacher
English Branches
Poultry Farming
Agriculture
Chemist
Salesman

Spanish
French
German

Name _____

Present Occupation _____

Street and No. _____

City _____

State _____

Beauty Purity and Health Of Skin and Hair



Promoted by Cuticura Soap and Ointment

To maintain the purity and beauty of the complexion, the health of the scalp and hair, the softness and whiteness of the hands and nails, Cuticura Soap, with occasional applications of Cuticura Ointment, is invaluable. No other emollients do so much and cost so little.



Cuticura Soap and Ointment are sold everywhere. For sample of each, with 32-p. book, free, address "Cuticura," Dept. 138, Boston.

TENDER-FACED MEN

Should shave with Cuticura Soap Shaving Stick, 25c. Makes shaving a pleasure instead of a torture. Liberal sample free.

Brown Your Hair WITH WALNUT TINT HAIR STAIN



Light Spots, Gray or Streaked
Hair Quickly Stained to a
Beautiful Brown.

Trial Bottle Sent Upon Request.

Nothing gives a woman the appearance of age more surely than gray, streaked or faded hair. Just a touch now and then with Mrs. Potter's Walnut-Tint Hair Stain and presto! Youth has returned again.

No one would ever suspect that you stained your hair after you use this splendid preparation. It does not rub off as dyes do, and leaves the hair nice and fluffy, with a beautiful brown color.

It only takes you a few minutes once a month to apply Mrs. Potter's Walnut-Tint Hair Stain with your comb. Stains only the hair, is easily and quickly applied, and it is free from lead, sulphur, silver and all metallic compounds. Has no odor, no sediment, no grease. One bottle of Mrs. Potter's Walnut-Tint Hair Stain should last you a year. Sells for \$1.00 per bottle at first-class druggists. We guarantee satisfaction. Send your name and address, and enclose 25 cents (stamps or coin) and we will mail you, charges prepaid, a trial package, in plain, sealed wrapper, with valuable booklet on hair. Mrs. Potter's Hygienic Supply Co., 1692 Groton Bldg., Cincinnati, O.

DESIGNING for WOMEN

A congenial and profitable occupation. A big demand everywhere. You can learn at home to be an expert designer. Names of successful graduates given on request. For full information, without obligation, write today.

International Correspondence Schools
Box 1199F, Scranton, Pa.



"Can take a pound a day off a patient, or put it on. Other systems may temporarily alleviate, but this is sure and permanent."—A. J.

See, Aug., 1881. Send for lecture: "Great Subject of Fat." No Dieting. No Hard Work.

DR. JOHN WILSON GIBBS' TREATMENT FOR THE PERMANENT REDUCTION OF OBESITY
Harmless and Positive. No Failure. Your reduction is assured—produce to stay. One month's treatment \$5.00. Mail or office, 1370 Broadway, New York. A PERMANENT REDUCTION GUARANTEED.

"Is positive and permanent."—N. Y. Herald, July 9, 1885.
"On Obesity, Dr. Gibbs is the recognized authority."—N. Y. World, July 7, 1900.



**Prof. I. HUBERT'S
MALVINA
CREAM**

**"The One Reliable
Beautifier"**

Positively cures Freckles, Sunburn, Pimples, Ringworm and all imperfections of the skin and prevents wrinkles. Does not merely cover up but eradicates them. Malvina Lotion and Shaving Soap should be used in connection with Malvina Cream. At all druggists, or sent post paid on receipt of price. Cream, 50c. Lotion, 50c., Soap, 25c.

Prof. I. HUBERT, Toledo, Ohio

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**A Half Inch of Cream
A Few Movements of the Brush
A Perfect Lather**

Mennen's Shaving Cream

"The Perfect Shaving Medium"

Applied directly on the face—lathers freely and instantly. Contains no free caustic and absolutely will not dry on nor smart the face—breaks down the beard without the usual "rubbing-in"—extremely economical—100 shaves per tube

—no waste—sanitary—antiseptic.

Mennen's Shaving Cream is not the hasty product of a day, but the result of three years' careful investigation and experimenting. The name Mennen is behind the cream.

For sale everywhere, 25c.

Sample Tube Free

GERHARD MENNEN COMPANY

Orange Street Newark, N. J.



PHYSICAL CULTURE FOR THE FACE



Beauty by Exercising Facial Muscles

Every Woman Knows that Physical Culture restores youthful outlines and health to the body. Kathryn Murray, after ten years study, has perfected a scientific system of Facial Physical Culture which restores youthful expression, contour and healthy freshness to the Face in the same marked degree. This system remedies, removes and prevents

Lines on Forehead

"Crow's Feet" etc.

Drawn Down Features

Sagging Cheeks

Drooping Mouth Corners

Double Chin

Hollows in Cheeks and neck

Withered and Yellow Necks

Finefold, or Wasted Tissues

Congested, Muddy Complexion

(By Inadequate Circulation)

Underdeveloped Muscles

Miss Murray's Book "Face and Figure" tells how young women can enhance and preserve, and older women restore, facial Beauty. No one is too old to benefit. This book also describes Splendid New Physical Culture Course for the body and one for children. Write for it today. Free

KATHRYN MURRAY Dept. 6, 417 S. Dearborn St., CHICAGO

Is The Ladder Safe

THE ladder up which the fireman climbs to put out the fire must be safe. Every inch of its lumber must be seasoned and sound. So ought the insurance company on which you depend for payment of your loss be safe. It must be seasoned by long experience and sound by many trials of its strength. No company meets these requirements better than the old **HARTFORD**. So when you need fire insurance **Insist on the Hartford** Agents Everywhere

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MAKING MAGAZINE HISTORY

There is no other magazine published that contains as many of the best stories by the most widely known writers of the day as *The Popular*. It is setting a new pace, establishing a new record, making history. The collection of unusual stories by prominent authors in the last number of the *Popular* was the best ever gathered between the covers of any magazine! And we believe that the

First November Popular

is just as good. If you read fiction you want the *best*. You'll get it in this number.

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On sale at all news stands October 7th

White Valley GEMS

Substitutes
for Diamonds

Send for FREE Catalog!

showing wonderful White Valley Gems in Rings (Ladies' or Gentlemen's), Scarf Pins, Studs, Brooches, Necklaces, Cuff Buttons, Lockets, Earrings—100 different articles and styles.

Not glass, not paste, not any kind of imitation, but beautiful, splendid gems. (White Sapphire chemically produced.)

Look like finest diamonds. Will scratch file, and cut glass. Stand acid test. Famous society women substitute White Valley Gems for real diamonds—or wear the two together confidently.

It is **solid gold** mountings. 25-year Guarantee Certificate with each gem. Ring measure sent with catalog. Will send any article in book **O. O. D.**—express prepaid—subject to examination—or by registered mail on receipt of price. Money refunded if not satisfactory.

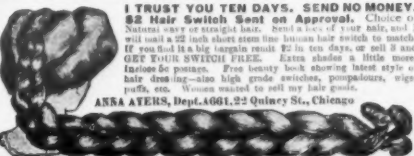
WHITE VALLEY GEM CO.
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Profitable Poultry Raising

You can't learn *successful* poultry raising from a mere book; you must be guided by experts who know and who are now raising poultry for profit. This instruction will be given you in the **I. C. S. Course of Profitable Poultry Raising**. To learn how the **I. C. S.** can teach you at home the science of practical, profitable poultry raising, write today for free descriptive folder.

International Correspondence Schools
Box 1199 P, Scranton, Pa.



I TRUST YOU TEN DAYS. SEND NO MONEY. 22 Hair Switch Sent on Approval. Choice of Natural wavy or straight hair. Send a box of your hair, and I will mail a 22 inch short stem time between hair switch to match. If you find it a big bargain result \$2 in ten days, or get 3 and GET FOUR SWITCH FREE. Also shades a little more, ladies be so good. Free beauty book showing latest style of hair dressing—also high grade scissors, pompadour, wig, puff, etc. Women wanted to sell my hair goods.

ANNA AYERS, Dept. 4661, 22 Quincy St., Chicago

Discouraged About Your Complexion?

Cosmetics only make it worse and do not hide the pimples, freckles, black-heads or red spots on face or nose.

Dr. James P. Campbell's Safe Arsenic Complexion Wafers will purify your blood, cleanse and beautify the skin, and give you a fresh and spotless complexion.

Use these absolutely safe and harmless wafers for 30 days and then let your mirror praise the most wonderful beautifier of the complexion and figure known to the medical profession. Used by Beautiful Women for 27 years.

\$1.00 per Box. (Full 30 day treatment.)

We guarantee as freshly packed and of full strength, when boxes have Blue Wrapper bearing our printed guarantee. Sold by all reliable druggists or sent by mail prepaid in plain cover from **RICHARD FINK CO., Dept. 55, 415 Broadway, New York City**
Send 10c. in stamps for sample box.



Sweeping with Ease

This has been made possible by the **BISSELL** Sweeper. It weighs but 5½ pounds, operates by a mere touch, cleans thoroughly without injury to carpets or rugs, raises no dust, always ready, no burden to carry from room to room, is the only efficient cleaning apparatus that is offered at a price within the purchasing power of the masses.

BISSELL'S

"Cyco" BALL-BEARING
Carpet Sweeper

exceeds all other cleaning devices in the work it does in the sewing room, dining room, or wherever there is a miscellaneous lot of litter to gather up. The "BISSELL" picks up without effort, lint, large crumbs, matches, threads, ravelings, scraps of paper and cloth, etc. The "BISSELL" gives the Maximum Sweeping Efficiency at the Minimum Cost. Prices \$2.75 to \$5.75, depending upon style and finish. Sold everywhere by the best dealers in Furniture, Carpets, Hardware, Housefurnishings, and Department Stores. Send for booklet.

Bissell Carpet Sweeper Co.
Dept. 56
Grand Rapids, Mich.

(Largest Exclusive
Carpet Sweeper
Makers in the
World)

(24)

THE HOUSEHOLD APERIENT.



BOTTLED AT THE SPRINGS, BUDA PEST, HUNGARY.

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.

DIAMONDS - WATCHES ON CREDIT

LOFTIS
CREDIT SYSTEM

HOW EASILY
YOU
CAN WEAR
AND OWN A
DIAMOND
OR A WATCH

Send for These Two Books—They Are Absolutely FREE!

Write for our handsome free catalog. It contains over two thousand (2,000) beautiful illustrations of diamonds, watches, solid gold jewelry, silverware and novelties at bargain prices. Select any article desired, have it sent to your own home or express office—all charges prepaid. If it is entirely satisfactory, send one-fifth the purchase price and keep it; balance in eight equal monthly amounts. We are offering great bargains in ladies' and men's watches. Our Blue Book, which tells "How Easy You Can Wear a Diamond or Watch by the Loftis System," answers every question that a person could ask about our liberal credit plan or concerning the purchase of diamonds, watches and jewelry on credit. It is beautifully embossed in blue and gold and is worth its weight in gold to anyone interested in our line.

Both of these books will be sent to you absolutely free upon request, write today.

LOFTIS BROS. & CO.

THE OLD RELIABLE, ORIGINAL Diamond and Watch Credit House

Dept. E 843 100 to 108 N. State Street, CHICAGO, ILL.

Branch Offices: Pittsburgh, Pa., and St. Louis, Mo.

LOFTIS BROS. & CO.

THE OLD RELIABLE

DIAMOND AND WATCH CREDIT HOUSE



REGISTERED DESIGN TRADE MARK
CHICAGO ILLINOIS U.S.A.



Old Dutch Cleanser

Cuts the Grease
Like Magic



MANY USES AND
FULL DIRECTIONS
ON LARGE SIFTER
CAN 10¢

THE Keeley Cure

For Liquor and Drug Users

A scientific remedy that has cured nearly half a million in the past thirty-two years. Administered by medical specialists at Keeley Institutes only. Write for particulars

To the Following Keeley Institutes:

Hot Springs, Ark.
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West Haven, Conn.
Jacksonville, Fla.

Atlanta, Ga.
Dwight, Ill.
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Portland, Me.
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Kansas City, Mo.
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CONGRESS GOLD EDGED PLAYING CARDS

AIR-CUSHION FINISH



50¢ PER PACK

For Social Play
Artistic Designs
Rich Colors
New Each Year
Club Indexes

THE
OFFICIAL RULES
OF
CARD GAMES
HOYLE UP-TO-DATE
ISSUED YEARLY
SENT FOR 15¢ IN STAMPS

BICYCLE CLUB INDEXED PLAYING CARDS

IVORY OR AIR-CUSHION FINISH

Special Skill and
Years of Experience
Have Developed Their
Matchless Playing Qualities
For General Play



25¢ PER PACK

THE U.S. PLAYING CARD CO. CINCINNATI, U.S.A.

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.

Since the decision rendered by the United States Supreme Court, it has been decided by the Monks hereafter to bottle

CHARTREUSE

(Liqueur Pères Chartreux)

both being identically the same article, under a combination label representing the old and the new labels, and in the old style of bottle bearing the Monks' familiar insignia, as shown in this advertisement.

According to the decision of the U. S. Supreme Court, handed down by Mr. Justice Hughes on May 29, 1911, no one but the Carthusian Monks (Pères Chartreux) is entitled to use the word CHARTREUSE as the name or designation of a Liqueur, so their victory in the suit against the Cusenier Company representing M. Henri Lecouturier, the Liquidator appointed by the French Courts, and his successors, the Compagnie Pèmiere de la Grande Chartreuse, is complete.

The Carthusian Monks (Pères Chartreux), and they alone, have the formula or recipe of the secret process employed in the manufacture of the genuine Chartreuse, and have never parted with it. There is no genuine Chartreuse save that made by them at Tarragona, Spain.

At first-class Wine Merchants, Grocers, Hotels, Cafés.
Bätjer & Co., 45 Broadway, New York, N. Y.
Sole Agents for the United States.



BAROQUE DIAMONDS
Flash Like Genuine
ANY JEWELRY STYLE
at 1/40 the cost—IN SOLID GOLD RINGS
Stand acid test and expert examination. We guarantee them. See them first—then pay.
Special Offer—14k Tiffany ring 1 ct. \$5.99. Gentle ring 1 ct. \$6.98. 14k Stud 1 ct. \$4.98. Sent C. O. D. for inspection. Catalog FREE, above full line. Patent ring gauge included. 10c.
Baroque Co., Dept. A-6 Island and Dover St., Chicago

Learn Typewriting

Every business man and woman should be a typewriting expert. You can learn to master a typewriter at home through I. C. S. help. Course covers every branch of typewriter work—from keyboard to public office and law work. This is the last word on typewriting, and is the way by which you can most quickly and surely become proficient. For free descriptive booklet, write today.
International Correspondence Schools
Box 11997, Scranton, Pa.



CRESCA DELICACIES

The richest, choicest foods native to every clime—completely described, with new recipes, in "Cresca Foreign Luncheons," our distinctive booklet illustrated in color, sent for 2c. stamp. Address
CRESCA COMPANY, Importers, 361 Greenwich St., N. Y.



This Switch Given FREE
Send us a sample of your hair and we will mail you this beautiful 22-inch human hair switch to match. If satisfactory send us \$1.99 any time within 10 days, or sell it to your friends for \$1.50 each and get yours absolutely free. Extra shades a little higher. Souvenir catalog showing latest styles of fashionable hairdressing, etc., on request. Enclose for postage. Marguerite Golly, Dept. 215 115 S. Dearborn St., Chicago.

RIDER AGENTS WANTED
In each town to ride and exhibit sample 1913 model. Write for Special Offer. Finest Guaranteed 1913 Models \$10 to \$27 with Coaster-Brakes and Puncture-Proof Tires. 1911 and 1912 MODELS ALL OF BEST MAKES..... \$7 to \$12
100 Second-Hand Wheels
All makes and models, good as new Great Factory Clearing Sale. \$3 to \$8
We ship on Approval without a cent deposit, pay the freight & allow **10 Days' Free Trial**
TIRES coaster-brake wheels, lamps, and sundries, half usual price. **DO NOT** BUY till you get our catalogue and offer. Write now
MEAD CYCLE CO., Dept. A-110 CHICAGO

LABLACHE
FACE POWDER
AUTUMN GLORY
Triumphantly follows summer sunshine and Nature is at her best. LABLACHE triumphs over wind and sun. Discerning women everywhere appreciate its value in preparing for the social requirements of winter. Invisible, adherent, dependable.
Refuse substitutes
They may be dangerous. Flesh, White, Pink or Cream, etc. a box of druggists or by mail. Over two million boxes sold annually. Send 10c. for a sample box.
BEN. LEVY CO.,
French Perfumers, Department 40,
113 Kingston Street, Boston, Mass.

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.



1850 FIRE DEPARTMENT LINIMENT

USED BY FIREMEN, SOLDIERS AND
ATHLETES FOR THREE GENERATIONS

QUICK RELIEF OF ALL PAINS, ACHES AND INFLAMMATIONS. A FIRST AID TO THE INJURED REQUIRING IMMEDIATE AND SERIOUS ATTENTION. REMOVES ABSOLUTELY ALL STIFFNESS FROM LAME MUSCLES, COLDS, SPRAINS, ETC.

GREAT TONIC FOR THE WEAK AND ANÆMIC

PRICE, FIFTY CENTS PER BOTTLE

PASTEUR CHEMICAL CO., 98 BEEKMAN STREET, NEW YORK



WE INVITE EVERY THIN MAN AND WOMAN

This is an invitation that no thin man or woman can afford to ignore. We invite you to try a new treatment called "Sargol" that helps digest the food you eat—that puts good, solid flesh on people that are thin and under weight.

How can "Sargol" do this? We will tell you. This new treatment is a scientific, assimilative agent. It increases cell growth, the very substance of which our bodies are made—puts red corpuscles in the blood which every thin person so sadly needs, strengthens the nerves and puts the digestive tract in such shape that every ounce of food gives out its full amount of nourishment to the blood instead of passing through the system undigested and unassimilated.

Women who never appear stylish in anything they wear because of their thinness, men under weight or lacking in nerve force or energy have been made to enjoy the pleasures of life—been fitted to fight life's battles, as never for years, through the use of "Sargol."

If you want a beautiful and well-rounded figure of which you can be justly proud—a body full of throbbing life and energy, write the Sargol Company, 400-X, Herald Bldg., Binghamton, N. Y., today, for 50c. box "Sargol," absolutely free, and use with every meal.

But you say you want proof! Well, here you are. Here is the statement of those who have tried—been convinced—

and will swear to the virtues of this preparation:

REV. GEORGE W. DAVIS says:

"I have made a faithful trial of the Sargol treatment and must say it has brought to me new life and vigor. I have gained twenty pounds and now weigh 150 pounds, and, what is better, I have gained the days of my boyhood. It has been the turning point in my life."

MRS. A. I. RODENHEISER writes:

"I have gained immensely since I took Sargol, for I only weighed about 106 pounds when I began using it and now I weigh 130 pounds, so really this makes twenty-four pounds. I feel stronger and am looking better than ever before and now I carry rosy cheeks, which is something I could never say before."

CLAY JOHNSON says:

"Please send me another ten-day treatment. I am well pleased with Sargol. It has been the light of my life. I am getting back to my proper weight again. When I began to take Sargol I only weighed 138 pounds, and now, four weeks later, I am weighing 155 pounds and feeling fine."

F. GAGNON writes:

"Here is my report since taking the Sargol treatment. I am a man 67 years of age, and was all run down to the very bottom. I had to quit work, as I was so weak. Now, thanks to Sargol, I look like a new man. I gained 22 pounds with 23 days' treatment. I cannot tell you how happy I feel."

MRS. VERNIE ROUSE says:

"Sargol is certainly the grandest treatment I ever used. I took only two boxes of Sargol. My weight was 118 pounds and now I weigh 140 and feel better than I have for five years. I am now as fleshy as I want to be and shall certainly recommend Sargol, for it does just exactly what you say it will do."

Full address of any of these people if you wish.

Probably you are now thinking whether all this can be true. Stop it! "Sargol" does make thin people add flesh, but we don't ask you to take our word for it. Write us today and we will send you absolutely free a 50c. package for trial. **Cut off coupon below and pin to your letter.**

THIS COUPON GOOD FOR 50c. PACKAGE "SARGOL."

This coupon entitles any thin person to one 50c. package "Sargol" (provided you have never tried it.) The Sargol Company, 400-X Herald Bldg., Binghamton, N. Y.

It's true. Mother has had her picture taken rather oftener than father has—but even she hasn't been in two years and that picture will never do to send to Aunt Jane. She wears her hair so much more becomingly now—and anyway, it's high time there was another picture for the family collection.

There's a photographer in your town.
Eastman Kodak Company, Rochester, N. Y.



Your Telephone Horizon

The horizon of vision, the circle which bounds our sight, has not changed.

It is best observed at sea. Though the ships of today are larger than the ships of fifty years ago, you cannot see them until they come up over the edge of the world, fifteen or twenty miles away.

A generation ago the horizon of speech was very limited. When your grandfather was a young man, his voice could be heard on a still day for perhaps a mile. Even though he used a speaking trumpet, he could not be heard nearly so far as he could be seen.

Today all this has been changed. The telephone has vastly extended the horizon of speech.

Talking two thousand miles is an everyday occurrence, while in order to see this distance, you would need to mount your telescope on a platform approximately 560 miles high.

As a man is followed by his shadow, so is he followed by the horizon of telephone communication. When he travels across the continent his telephone horizon travels with him, and wherever he may be he is always at the center of a great circle of telephone neighbors.

What is true of one man is true of the whole public. In order to provide a telephone horizon for each member of the nation, the Bell System has been established.

**AMERICAN TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANY
AND ASSOCIATED COMPANIES**

Every Bell Telephone is the Center of the System.

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.



Rifle and Pistol METALLIC CARTRIDGES

Shoot to Hit

The Remington Cubs find
that they will shoot where you hold.

**More—Their Use Guarantees the Life—
the Continued Accuracy of Your Gun.**

**96 years of gun-making—50 years of cartridge-
making have taught us**

**To make cartridges noted for straight-
shooting—hard-hitting—sure-fire.**

**To attain ammunition accuracy without
impairing gun accuracy.**

**To make for each kind of arm the cart-
ridge it requires to shoot its best—and
to keep shooting its best.**

**There is a *Remington-UMC* cartridge specially made
for your rifle—your pistol. Every *Remington-UMC*
cartridge is tested in the arm for which it is made.**

**Our Guarantee is behind these cartridges—and be-
hind any standard arm, to the full extent of the maker's
own guarantee, when these cartridges are used.**

**Shoot the cartridges that shoot straight. Shoot
the cartridges that keep your gun shooting straight.
Shoot *Remington-UMC* cartridges.**

***Remington-UMC* Hollow Point Cartridges in sev-
eral calibres for various makes of arms are unequalled
in shocking power—they cost only a trifle more.**

Remington Arms-Union Metallic Cartridge Co.
299 Broadway New York City



Remington-UMC Eastern Factory loaded steel lined shells now for sale on the Pacific Coast.

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.



“Standard” GUARANTEED PLUMBING FIXTURES



HE love of cleanliness should be developed in children by making cleanliness a pleasure rather than a duty.

“Standard” Fixtures by appealing to the child’s mind through its love of the beautiful make cleanliness attractive. Every member of the household feels the refining influence of “Standard” Fixtures.

Genuine “Standard” fixtures for the Home and for School, Office Buildings, Public Institutions, etc., are identified by the Green and Gold Label, with the exception of one brand of baths bearing the Red and Black Label, which, while of the first quality of manufacture, have a slightly thinner enameling, and thus meet the re-

quirements of those who demand “Standard” quality at less expense. All “Standard” fixtures, with care, will last a lifetime. And no fixture is genuine *unless it bears the guarantee label*. In order to avoid substitution of inferior fixtures, specify “Standard” goods in writing (not verbally) and make sure that you get them.

Standard Sanitary Mfg. Co. Dept. O

New York . . . 35 West 31st Street
Chicago . . . 900 S. Michigan Ave.
Philadelphia . . . 1128 Walnut Street
Toronto, Can. . . 59 Richmond St., E.
Pittsburgh . . . 106 Federal Street
St. Louis . . . 100 N. Fourth Street
Cincinnati . . . 633 Walnut Street

Nashville . . . 315 Tenth Avenue, so.
New Orleans, Baronne & St. Joseph Sts.
Montreal, Can. . . 215 Coristine Bldg.
Boston . . . John Hancock Bldg.
Louisville . . . 319-23 W. Main Street
Cleveland . . . 648 Huron Road, S. E.
Hamilton, Can. . . 20-26 Jackson St., W.

PITTSBURGH, PA.

London . . . 57-60 Holborn Viaduct
Houston, Tex. . . Preston and Smith Sts.
San Francisco, Cal.
Merchants National Bank Building
Washington, D.C. . . Southern Bldg.
Toledo, Ohio . . . 311-321 Erie Street
Fort Worth, Tex. . . Front and Jones Sts.

Natural Flesh Tints

THERE is no improving on nature. When art essays to depict beauty, the nearer to nature's own coloring it gets with its flesh tints, the more successful is the realization. This shows that only natural beauty is really effective. This was the prompting idea in the invention of



Pears' Soap

a hundred and twenty years ago. It is a soap composed wholly of such pure emollient and detergent ingredients as the skin naturally and freely responds to.

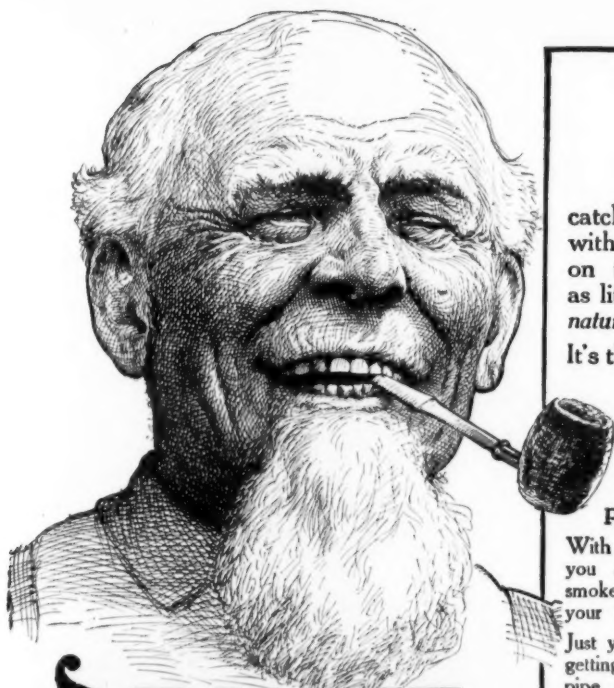
Pears never spoils the natural flesh tints. It improves them, by keeping the skin soft, fine and pure. Its influence is so kind, beneficial and refining that its use means the preservation of the dainty pink and white of a perfect complexion from infancy to old age. Pears is in accord with nature first and last.

The skin is kept soft and the complexion beautiful by using Pears which maintains the soft refined daintiness which is nature's alone.

"All rights secured."

OF ALL SCENTED SOAPS PEARS' OTTO OF ROSE IS THE BEST.

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements.



PRINCE ALBERT

*the national
joy smoke*

Pipeology

Here's a popular pipe—a corn-cob fitted with a wooden stem and a bone mouth bit. It's just a little niftier than the ordinary corn-cob, but costs no more. It imparts the same satisfaction to the smoker.



Tender tongues

catch the hobnob habit with Prince Albert tobacco on the first fire-up, just as little ducks go to water, *natural like!*

It's this way: Prince Albert won't sting tongues, because the sting's *cut out* by the patented process that has revolutionized pipe tobacco.

With P. A. jammed in the bowl, you and every other man can smoke a pipe all you want and your tongue *won't even tingle!*

Just you figure out the joy of getting real fun out of a jimmy pipe and forget that old idea that pipe tobacco can't be free from the bite. It sure can, because P. A. knocked that galley-west two years ago. *It's the one pipe tobacco* that you can bet a house and lot on today, next week, next year!

Oh, stop a-wishing about it! Go to it!

And listen, P. A. makes the best cigarette you ever rolled. Fresh, sweet, delicious — as bully good as in a pipe! And that's trotting *some!*

Buy Prince Albert everywhere — St. Paul, New York, Tampa, Winnipeg, Seattle, Five Corners, Kankakee—it's just the same glorious smoke. In 5c topsey red bags; 10c tidy red tins; handsome pound and half-pound humidoras.

R. J. REYNOLDS TOBACCO CO.
Winston-Salem, N. C.



The Morning Beverage *Instantly*

A cup of hot water
A level teaspoonful of Powder
and there you are



INSTANT POSTUM

Under the new method we boil Postum at the factories and reduce it to a Powder, which dissolves instantly in hot water and produces a perfect cup of Postum.

This makes it easy for anyone unpleasantly affected by coffee to stop it and be rid of the disorders.

"There's a Reason"

Sample sent for 2-cent stamp to cover postage.

Grocers sell 100-cup tin 50c.

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